PORTRAITVRE of the prodigall ſonne:

Liuelie ſet forth in a three-fold Diſcourſe.

1 Of his Progreſſe.
2 Of his Regreſſe.
3 Of his ioyfull welcome home.

Publiſhed by *Samuell Gardiner* Batchler of Diuinitie.

Ezech. 18. verſ. 23.

Haue I anie deſire that the wicked ſhoulde die, ſaith the Lord God? or ſhall he not liue if he returne from his wayes?

AT LONDON,
Printed by P. S. for Nicholas Ling, and are to be ſolde at his ſhop at the weſt end of Powles.
1599.

To the Right Worſhipfull *ſir Hierome Bowes Knight*, all externall, and eternall *happineſſe*.

WHatſoeuer my learning, and iudgement is, ſure I am it is the gift of God: Euerie gift of God, the more it is occupied, the more it is encreaſed: euen as fire the more it is blowen the brighter it burneth: or as a ſworde which the more it is ſcowred the more it gliſtereth: or finally as corne, which the more it is grinded, the more flower it yeeldeth. The parable of the Talents inſinuateth ſo much, and dayly experience ſheweth no leſſe. I doubt not therefore but that this my ſmall talent put out vnto the exchãgers by his good grace vpon it, working in the harts of thoſe that ſhall borrow it, ſhall

Mat. 25

be returned to my maſter with aduantage.
ing. 4 The pittaunce of oyle of the widowe womans remaining in hir pitcher, was ſo encreaſed through the goodneſſe of God, by the hand of his Prophet, as ſhe had not only ynough to ſupply hir daylie wants: but ſufficient remayning, to make payment of her debts. The Lord our God hath rayſed
ver. 18 vp a Prophet from among our brethren, by whoſe bleſſing, I doe hope that this litle oyle of heauenlie knowledge, which God hath powred into the veſſell of my ſoule, ſhall receiue ſuch encreaſe, as beſides ſufficiencie to ſerue common needes, ſomewhat ſhall redownd to diſcharge my iuſt debtes due to you and others. Wherefore (right worthie Knight) take from my hāds this deſerued labour by your kindneſſe vndeſerued. It is moſt due vnto you, for ſundrie due reſpects. For firſt the dedication of bookes to men of merite, hath bin a very ancient and common cuſtome, deducted from the practiſe of the primitiue church, and ſince by the ancient fathers & ſchoolmen, and nowe by the learned of our time and age put in common vſe. What you merite of mee, I ſpare to ſhewe becauſe I woulde not bee thought to flatter you: and

the rather becauſe your religious loue hath beene of late ſo publiquelie ſignified, as it ſeemeth a thinge needleſſe by mee to bee rehearſed. In a word (good Knight) I owe vnto you, as much as it is lawfull for a man to owe, and therefore I entitle this treatiſe vnto you, in ſteed of a parcell of the grand arrerages that are comming vnto you. Moreouer, if Saint Iohn did not amiſſe in ſuperſcribing his ſecond epiſtle which hee made, to his elect Ladie, and his thirde epiſtle, vnto his beloued Gaius: I cannot be blamed for conſecrating theſe the fruites of my ſtudies to my electe, and moſt beloued Knight. Nay if Saint Luke inſcribed his goſpell to his moſt noble Theophilus, which ſignifieth a friend and louer of God: ſithence I am aſſured that I haue hapned vppon another Theophilus and louer of Gods worde, I thinke you very worthie of this hiſtorie of Saint Luke. And this was the principall inducement ẏ moued me to giue you this book: for howſoeuer I might alledge aliaunce, and worldly reſpects many, yet the regarde of your zeale and religion is more moouing then any. You being both of iudgement rightly to conceiue of it and of worſhip and countenance ſuffici-

2. *Iohn.* 3. *Iohn.*

Luk. 1

ent to defend it, I cõmit it vnto you, & you vnto the almighty, who make your ancient and worshipfull name famous stil in earth, and engrosse it and registeer it in the booke of the righteous, in the life that is to come.

Your worships to be commaunded
SAMVEL GARDINER.

To the Religious Reader.

Thou hast here (good Reader) a Manuel of melliſluous meditations, which this ſcripture of ſcriptures, and this ſtorie the ſtorehouſe, and library of learning aboundantly & fruitfully yeeldeth vnto thee. Here is the iuice of that pleaſãt grape, that pure new wine, which being pnt into new veſſels, refreſheth and maketh glad the hart of man, & here is that oile, euen the grace of God, which maketh him to haue a cheerefull countenance. No Nectar, and Ambroſia which the Poets faine to bee the drink and meate of the Goàs may compare with this. The Manna of the Iſraelites, and the Angels food, which the Lord did ſend vnto them is nothing æquiualent & proportionable vnto this: for thoſe that did eat of that are all dead, but whoſoeuer taſteth and feedeth vpon this he ſhall liue for euer. For this giueth nouriſhment vnto dry and deade conſciences,

Matt. 9

Pſal. 104

Pſal. 78

Iohn. 6

Ezech.37. and putteth life into them: as the word of God in the mouth of Ezechiel did to dry and deade bones. The ſpirit ſpeaketh euidently throughout this whole diſcourſe how as the lord is iuſt in puniſhing of ſinners: ſo is hee as mercifull vnto thoſe that doe repent: As in his lefte hande hee holdeth out a ſworde readie for to wound vs; ſo with his right hand he putteth forth a ſhield whereby to defend vs. The Lord is like vnto a louing father, who reclaimeth his ryotous, and vnruly ſonne with the rod of his diſpleaſure: but being corrigible, and reformed by his diſcipline hee throweth away his rodde, and in mercie embraceth him of euerie

Rom.2 ſide. Tribulation, and anguiſh ſhall bee vpon the ſoule of euery man that doeth euill, to the Iewe firſt and alſo to the Grecian: but to euerie man that doth good ſhall be honor and glo-

Pſal.6. rie, and as many as walke after his waies, peace ſhall be vpon them, and mercie, and vppon the Iſraell of God. So as heere hee harpeth with the kingly harper vppon theſe two ſtringes, and his antheme and ſonge is of mercie and Iudgement, and about theſe two pointes is all

Pſal.101 this ſtorie ſpente. Each ſeuerall man ſhoulde bee anothers looking glaſſe: but this man is a ſpectacle in the Theater of this worlde, for all men to looke vppon. In whome wee may

ſee

ſee the riches and bountie of the grace of God towardes vs, howe his hande is not ſo ſhorte but hee can ſaue: nor his eares ſo thicke but hee can heare: nor our ſinnes ſo greate, but he can and will releaſe vppon our returne with this prodigall man vnto him. Heere is fulfilled the Aphor.ſme of the Prophet in the mouth of the Lorde. I will not the death of a ſinner, but rather that hee repente and liue. And this of the Pſalmographe. Truely, God is good vnto Iſrael, and to thoſe that be of a true hart: Yea to thoſe that are of a bad hart too, as this mans preſidẽt, & example teacheth vs. We ſhould rather liue by laves then by examples: yet are examples more forcible with vs, and we are led to good or euill by them, & we work by thẽ as an artificer by his rule, and as young ſchollers, who write by their examples. Wee are proane to patterne this prodigall perſon, in his preposterous and peruerſe affections, and wee liuely beare his image which is earthly, ſo as this Poeticall fiction fitteth vs.

Eſai. 59

Ezech. 18

Pſal. 73

Tantalus a labiis ſitiens fugientia captat
Flumina. Quid rides? mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.

Horat.

But the Lord renew vs all in the inwarde man, that wee may followe him in his regenerate and renewed diſpoſition, and grant that

we

we may be like him in his image which is heauenly Therefore in his person take out thine owne proportion. In his beginning and procee ding in his sin we may clearly see the self same course, that sinne in like sort doth so begin and take deepe root in vs, that foreseeing the same we may the better either in time preuent it, or else with speede withdraw our feete out of it. In his infelicitie let vs see our owne miserie, into which we fal by our wilful iniquitie, that sin as a serpent full of deadly poyson may be hated of vs, that trembling at his iudgement, we follow not his misgouernment: We treade not in his steps, vnles we will be whipped with his stripes. In the course of his return he chalketh out the way vnto vs of our returne. His humilitie, confession and forme of supplication must be the condition of our reconciliation. Last of all, in the happy reconcilement and returne of vs prodigall children vnto our fathers house, the church of the liuing god, behold the Lords goodnes, and the blessinges which in store the lord hath laide vp for all that doe repent, and come home vnto him, they immediatly hear of ioy and gladnes, that the bones which he hath broken may reioice. The singers go before, the minstrels followe after, and with ioy and gladnesse shall they be brought, and enter into the

kings

Kinges pallace, where there is mirth without heauines, health without ſickneſs, fulnes without ſcarcitie, life without death. Thus haue wee laid togither in one ſumme matters of much price, the quinteſſence and dimenſions (as I may ſo cal this hyſtorie) of al diuinitie, ſo as (to conclude) this treatiſe is a treaſurehouſe which leadeth vs not to a bare contemplation, but to a full fruition, not to the naked knowledge, but the vſe, not to the promiſe but the practiſe of the abundaunt and ouerflowing grace of God vnto vs moſt miſerable ſinners, vnder the parable and perſon of this man the prodigall ſonne, in the ſequell portraied and painted out vnto thee, which I wiſh thee to reade religiouſlie, to meditate vpon fruitfullie, and to practiſe ſuch inſtructions as it affoordeth dutifully, and the Lord accompanie thee with his grace effectuallie.

Thine in the Lord Ieſu,

SAMVEL GARDINER.

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THE FIRST BOOKE.

VVHICH SETteth out the Progresse of the Prodigall Sonne.

The first Chapter.

Of the Argument Allegory, and manifolde vse of this principall parable.

THere are two sortes of persons who are the subiect, and Argument of this Parable. The one is the person of a renowned father: the other is of his children. The argument.

This worthy father as hee had but two sonnes, so were they deuided, and diuersly disposed. The one of them was indifferentlie conformable to his father: but the other was out of course, and most vnnatural vnto his father.

This yonker, was the younger, not in yeares, but manners: of so wilde, wilfull, and wicked inclination: as all lewde conditions in him did seeme to striue which of them should exceed: all kind of mischiefe to grow vp to a heade; and the mysterie

offsinne so to be compleat in him, as no vile quality could be found in any which did not redounde, and take deepe root in him. For being glutted with his fathers goodnesse, and surfeted with his bounty; fulnesse bred fulsomnesse, prosperitie presumption, and familiarity contempt: So as both his eies of his vnderstanding being out, hee fell as *Sampson* (similitude) into his enemies handes: and as a hooded Hawke was caried to and fro, whither his lustes led him. In this sort ranged hee about, and fetched a great compasse, and proceeded in his progresse; vntill by his chargeable trauailing by the way, hee had lauished out his substance, and had set out himselfe as a patterne of pity, in the theater of this world for all men to gaze vpon.

Saint *Luke* hath taken out his image very liuelie, and in a iust proportion hath painted him out vnto vs, in his orient colours. But first, as it is vsuall with Painters, and Lapidaries, hee shapeth him vnperfectlie, drawing out his lineaments, and portraiture with a coale: but afterwarde hee finisheth it, curiouslie comming ouer it with his pensill againe, polishing, and adorning it with siluer and golde, and with all kinde of beautifull, and costlie colours.

Wee will first view him in his deformed shape in the which we are to loath him: next we will reuiew him as he is reformed for the which we are to loue him.

His forme deformed, as hee is cast into a coale is described thus. First of all impatient to attende

his fathers death, or to abide his good pleasure: he challengeth sawcily, and imperiouslie enough his portion of his father, not onely before hee could of right demaund it, but also before hee could rightlie gouerne it.

Secondlie, not contented therewith, his eyes were so euill, because hee was good, as hee woulde no longer tarrie in his sight: but whereas his two sons were the two crutches and supporters of his age to beare vp his body, he cruelly without pitty bereaueth him of one, by roauing abroade, and taking his vagaries, after his sinnefull pleasures.

Thirdlie like a wastgood, and ryotous Ruffian, hee so lasheth it on, as his goods melte like waxe, before the heate of the Sunne: hee bringeth his goods and substaunce to an ende, as a tale that is tolde.

Fourthlie, ietting and iogging vppe and downe, till hee tyred himselfe with riotous spending and running vppon the skoare: hee purchaseth at the last repentance of his pleasure at too deere a rate. For the man and his money being once parted, hee was as the Asse trauailing in the daie time loden with golde, when the night came disburdened of his treasure, and turned into the stable with a galled backe. For throwing himselfe by his rechlesse prodigalitie, into all extremitie, his former prosperous, and honourable estate in his fathers house, was chaunged into the baseste and vildeste condition in his Maysters A similitu

forme. For of a ſonne he became a ſeruant, of free bonde, and in ſtead of former ſatietie and plentie, hee pined, and was almoſt conſumed away with want and penury.

But this vexation was his reformation, and his good ſchoolemaiſter who gaue him beſt inſtruction: For it wrought in him a ſpeedie alteration, and turned him to a godlie ſorrowe to ſaluation. It did put a newe ſong into his mouth, euen a dutifull ſubmiſsion to his God. For whileſt hee ſtoode by the waters of *Babylon* hee bitterly wept, when he remembred thee O *Sion*. His regarde of the proſperitie of hyred ſeruantes in his fathers *Sion*, coulde not but make his eyes a fountayne of tears ſtanding now by the waters of trouble, which were readie to runne ouer his ſoule in this worldlie *Babylon*.

al. 137

But this his heauineſſe which endured but for a night, brought vnto him all ioy in the morning. For as much rayne and great ſhowers, doe cauſe the enemy who aſſaulteth anie place, to breake vp his ſiege, and giue ouer the place: ſo the ſhowers of teares, which guſhed from his ſoule, diſcomfited, and ſcattered his hoaſt of troubles, which compaſſed him about, and redeemed, & brought his ſoule out of aduerſity. So as in him this prophecy is fulfilled. *The Morians land ſhall ſoone ſtretch out hir hands vnto God*. Hee that before by reaſon of his ſinne, was black like a Morian, is now made white by his returne from ſinne, as the ſnow in Salmon.

limilitude

d. 68

d. 68

d. 68

Though he hath lyen among the pots, yet nowe

he

he is as the wings of a Doue, that is couered with siluer wings, and her feathers of gold.

This we shall well see if wee shall reuise him in his renued holines, in his perfect forme, as he is absolutely shaped out vnto vs, and orientlie trimmed and expressed in his colours. For in him wee may behold, the image of that man that pleaseth God. such a one that resigneth & renounceth the world, and is changed by the renewing of his minde, proouing what is the will of God acceptable and perfect. As before he had giuẽ vp his members, as weapons of vnrighteousnesse vnto sinne: so now giuing them vp as weapons of righteousnesse vnto God. He is no more proude in his own eyes, but his soule is humbled euen as a weaned child: casting down himselfe before his mercie seate, and in feare worshipping towardes his holie Temple: comming with a rente heart, aswell as rente garmentes, and turning vnto the Lorde his God: desirous to bee a doore keeper, or a hired seruant in the house of his God, rather then to conuerse in this miserable condition in the tents of the vngodly.

Rom 12
Rom. 6
Psal. 131
Ioel. 2.
Psal. 84

And this his sute hath speedy good successe, his father beholding him a farre off with the eye of mercie, and graciouslie embracing him when he was in presence with the armes of pittie. For hee did put off his sackcloth and girded him with gladnesse, hee adorned him with a ring, dignity and greate worshippe did hee laie vppon him, he richlie did decke a Table for him in despight of his enimies, he did finallie make him glad with the ioy of

his countenance, and did wipe away al teares from his eyes.

The allegorie and morall application of this parable without constraining it seemeth to be this. The father is God: these his two sonnes, are two sortes of people in the Church of God: The one of them orderlie and of good gouernment contented to abide in his fathers house & liberties of this church: the other exorbitant, refractorie and disloyall, gadding abroad after his owne fancies, yet humbled by discipline, and by chastisement reformed. The far Country which he traced, was his far departure from his fathers Lawes, by his wicked lustes. The substance which he wasted, was the riches of his grace which he deuided to him. The famine hee sustained was the want of the breade of eternall life, and infinite other defectes and wants, vnto which a sinner is subiect when he is gone from God. The cruell tyrant whom hee serued was the Diuell whome he obayed: this farme of his which hee attended, was this present euill worlde, in the which the Diuell raigneth. The swine which he kept were vncleane spirits, vngodlie companions, the hearde into which the Deuils doe enter, and doe violentlie throwe into the sea of all euill. The huskes which rather burdened, then relieued his stomacke, were the light and idle vanities of this worlde. His sinnes wich hee did feede vppon, the alluring baites and inticementes of the Deuill. His returne home was his returne from sinne by speedy repentaunce: his welcome home was the gra-

he allego- of this rable.

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cious acceptance of this his repentaunce. His first roabe was his first royaltie which *Adam* lost, and Christ redeemed for vs. The seruaunts who did fetch it were the ministers of his holie worde, who bring his graces to vs. The ring was the seale of Gods holy spirit, and a token of his dignity: whereby he crieth *Abba, father*, and is sealed vnto the day of redemption. The shooes of his feete were the preparation of the Gospell of peace. The fat Calfe that was killed, was Christ slaine from the beginning of the worlde, for him and vs all his prodigal children. The heauenly banket, mirth, and musicke is the ioy and happines which we shal bee partakers of in the kingdome of heauen, all which shall bee orderlie prooued vnto vs in their proper places.

Now of this parable there is a manifold vse, whether we respect the matter, or maner of this history. It is like to a great peece of money which containeth in it the value of manie peeces. It is full of mysteries, and matters of much moment: albeit in our grosse, and carnall mindes we cannot conceiue them. It is often seene that thinges of great price of those that are ignoraunt of the vertue of them are vtterlie reiected: which by men of iudgement who doe know their nature are verie much accounted of. A base Countrey man passeth by a King and doth him no reuerence, because hee knoweth him not: A simple Pesant as he walketh in the fielde trampleth vnder foote many holsome simples, which the skilfull Apothecary carefullie

The vse of this parab. A similitud

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A similitu

gathereth vp and maketh of them many healthfull confections. In this fielde wherein we walke, many hearbes and flowers of forcible operations fit to bee applied to all wounded consciences may bee gathered of vs. There is no one bedde in the Lordes *Eden*, no place of holie Scripture in the whole Bible, which yeeldeth more sauory and comfortable doctrine then this place doeth. For first the manner and forme of this parable delighteth very much, as shrowding his matter vnder a parable and borrowed speech, and allegoricall discourse, and this is the common custome of Gods spirit for very good causes.

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First it serueth to strengthen our weake memories, that thereby wee may better keepe in minde his holesome instructions. For euen as the stomacke vnlesse it hath a retentiue facultie, to retaine and digest the meate and nourishment that is put into it, vntill it hath passage through the vaynes and partes of the whole bodie to cherish and to battle it, it receiueth no good: so vnlesse wee laie vp, and keepe in our hearts such needefull pointes of doctrine as are taught vs from the word, all preaching is in vaine, and our hearing is vnprofitable vnto vs.

nilitude

As precious pearles and iewels, are fastened vnto ribbandes that they might not bee loste: so Gods heauenlie worde an incomparable treasure, and a pearle of greatest price, is set out in parables, that it might not be lost of vs. You shall

haue

haue manie olde persons, that shall verie manie yeeres remember a familiar example, or similitude borrowed from such things, as we haue here common vse of, which they shal heare from a preacher: when as many other deepe poynts, and matters of more substance, then examined and discussed, shall be quite forgotten: and onelie because prouerbes and plausible similitudes, drawne from dayly practize, do take deeper roote, and impression in their mindes. And for this cause God doth often open his mouth in parables, and declare vnto the people hard sentences of olde.

2 That wee may better vnderstand that which is taught vs

A second cause mooving him thereunto, is to lay open and vnfolde more plainlie, that which is taught vs, that wee maie the better conceiue it and learne it. *Aristotle* the Philosopher prescribeth this course: *Vt à notioribus ad minus nota procedamus:* That in our way of teaching by plaine and knowne things we leade our schollers to the better vnderstanding of those that are vnknowne: howe because things visible, obiect to our senses, are better knowne, then those that are iuuisible, and remooued from the same; and those that are corporall are better conceyued then those that are spirituall: hence is it that parables and borrowed speeches from vulgar and knowne matters, serue as midwiues to further our trauaile in heauenlie knowledge, and do helpe exceedingly, and serue our capacities.

This parable is the

And as this Argument is mouing in it selfe in respect of the forme and maner thereof: so doth it

many

abridgment of the Gospel.

manie wayes instruct and comfort vs, in regarde of the subiect, and matter thereof. For I maie well tearme it the Epitome of the Gospell, the abstract and compendium of the whole woorke of our redemption. For these two poynts are the summe of our doctrine, and our preaching. The doctrine of Repentaunce: The forgiuenesse of sinnes. Vnto Repentance properlie doe belong the whole bodie of sinne, and our entire conuersion from our sinnes to God. The forgiuenesse of our sinnes naturally compriseth the free grace of God, our iustification, and whatsoeuer else appertaine to our Redemption. Nowe these and each of these, liuelie are depainted, as it were in a Table in his fresh colours, in the image and counterfeit of the prodigall sonne, the matter and argument of this famous hystorie.

The summe of the Gospel, Repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes.

The second Chapter.

Of the common condition of parents in their children vnder the person of the prodigall sonne his father: and therewithall of the estate of the militant Church.

THe person of the father by due order being first intreated of: his pitifull estate in his children is remembred. For being the kindest and best father that might bee, (as bearing the person of God the father) hee is a spectacle of the vnhappiest fa-

the

her in one of his children.

He had but two sonnes: but this fewnesse I steeme no small part of parents happinesse. For hildren being so chargeable in their bringing vp, he number of them howe so euer well inclined e mainlie burdensome vnto manie poore pa-nts, and doe vtterlie vndoe them, as well in their ood intendements of their ciuill education, as of eir putting foorth to their godlie informati-n. But heerein is all miserie, that out of vo there muste needes bee one in whome all wdnesse, and vngraciousnesse should abide: of most rebellious, vnnaturall, and desperate dis-osition.

This mans estate is set out as a looking Glasse wherein many fathers may beholde themselues: or this is no rare or straunge example, but such a ne as is rife and common in these dayes, as in mes of olde. For ancient recordes of holie writte oe shewe, how pestilentlie, and that common-e the holie fathers haue beene plagued, and tortu-d with their children. Of the first brace of sonnes which the worlds eie did see, was not *Caine* one of hem? A branded runnagate from the face of the arth, vnnaturall to his father, vnmercifull to his rother, hereticall towards God (as supposing his loudie fact could be hidde from God,) flattering imselfe in his owne wickednesse, vntill his abho-minable inuentions were found out: and last of all ulfilling the measure of his sinne, dreadfully dispai-ing of the mercie of his God?

A Glasse for fathers.

Gen.4.

But

But from *Adam* to descende to *Noah*: was lucke more fortunate, or his comfort in his childr greater? Of his leafe of fonnes was there no

Gen.9. *Cham*, whome neither the good counfaile of tender father coulde keepe in compaffe, nor fearefull example of Gods horrible vengeaunce the raging floud could reduce to order, but king an aduantage of his fathers weakeneffe ou whelmed with wine, and throwne into a fleep blowed open his skirts, and difcouered his nake neffe, and made him the argument of his fport a paftime, and a fcorne and derifion to thofe th were about him?

Gen.18. What fhall we fay of *Abraham* our father, whofe heedefull care of the well nurturing, an training vp his children, God himfelfe is witneffe If his lot did fall into a fairer ground he hath cau to reioyce: but his eie was not fo watchfull, an iealous ouer them, but of his two fonnes the ba begotten *Ifmael* was a fcoffing, eluifh and inordi nate companion.

To this calamitie was *Ifaac* alfo fubiect, wh was heauilie vexed with his vnhappie *Efau*.

But a load of afflictions was laid vpon *Iacob* b

Gen.34. his childrens mifgouerment. His onelye dear daughter and darling *Dinah* was rauifhed of *She-*

Gen.35. *chem*. *Ruben* his eldeft fon defiled his fathers bed

Gen.37. His Cockney *Ioseph* was folde as a bondflaue b

Gen.38. his fons to the *Ifmaelites*, and tranfported into E gypt. His fonne *Iudah* committed inceft with his daughter in lawe *Thamar*. And thus was hee

made

ade a myrrour of of miserie by his childrens in-
icitie.

Of this matter we haue a cloude of witnesses: t it is needeleſſe to heape vp examples in a thing manifeſt. *Helie* his two ſonnes *Hophney* and *nees. David* his two ſonnes *Ammon* and *Abſa-*, do confirme the ſame.

Wherefore let the diligent regard of theſe and h like examples prepare vs vnto patience, when euer it ſhall pleaſe God, to make the diſobedi-ce and rebellion of our children the chaſtiſement our ſinnes.

Our vnnaturall children bee giuen vs as ſpecta- A ſimilitude es to helpe our blinde eyes, that will not ſee our lues. By ſeeing their vndutifulneſſe vnto vs their hers, wee may ſee our owne vndutifulneſſe vnto od our Father. *For he hath nouriſhed and brought* *Iſay.1.* *children, but they haue rebelled againſt him.* It is erefore a iuſt puniſhment laid vpon vs, that they ould forget vs, becauſe we doe forget God. It is ods common courſe to puniſh ſinne by ſinne, *Aug. li. 5 cont. Iulian. cap. 2.* nd one ſinne (as *Auguſtine* ſayth) is the puniſh-ent of an other, and God permitteth one ſinne take vengeance of another, as afterwardes ſhall ee prooued more at large in his due place. But hat ende ſoeuer the Lord aymeth at by this kind iudgement, it is no ſtraunge thing for which we ould be wondred at, or bee a Prouerbe, or by orde in mens mouthes, becauſe of our euill qua-fied, and diſpoſed children. Parents muſt not eare the iniquitie of their children, and their diſſo-

lute

lute liues must not bee simplie laid vnto their ch
ges. For their eies wil be euill though they be go
an habit and custome, which is got of sinne is a
ther nature, and cannot be forsaken.

We are not to seuer our selues from the Church because of the wicked which are in the church.

Furthermore in the estate of this father in
children, we may perfectly behold the conditi
of the Church, thereby not obscurely shadow
and prefigured. For his two sonnes are two kind
of people, good and badde, mingled here togith
and resorting to the Church. It is not to bee look
for, that the militant Church should be witho
blemish and corruption in this world. For it is t
Matth.13 Lords field wherein the tares do grow vp with t
Matth.3 wheate, and the Lords floore wherein the chaffe
Matth.13 mingled with the wheate, and the draw net whi
gathereth togither al kinds of fish, and other thin
both good and bad. In *Dauids* Court there w
a wicked *Absalon*: in Christ his schoole there w
the traitor *Iudas:* among the companie of the de
cons, there was the crew of the Nicolaitans. The
Chrysost. is in euerie thing, as *Chrysostome* dooth obseru
which doth consume a thing, as out of wood the
Similitudes commeth a worme, from a garment a Moth, fro
a greene hearbe a canker, by which the woodde
corrupted, the garment fretted, the flower cons
med. The wicked will here bee among the godli
1. Sam. as *Saule* among the Prophets. But there will b
a time, when they shall bee separated: the whea
Matth. 3 from the chaffe, the seede from the Tares, t
Mat.13 Cockle from the Darnell, the Sheepe from t
Mat.25 Goates, and the intruder without a wedding ga

men

nent, shall bee culled out from the rest of the ompanie. A partition shall be made betweene *Caine* and *Abel*, *Isaac* and *Ismael*, *Esau* and *Iacob*, *Saul* and *Dauid*, *Ieremia* and *Pashur*, *Amos* and *Amasiah*, *Iudas* and the Apostles, the fiue foolish virgins and the wise, the citizens of the saints and the outcasts of Israel. *Gen.4.* *Gen.21.* *Gen.25.* *1.Sam.15* *Ierem.20* *Amos 7* *Mat.25*

In the meane while wee must in no case forsake the church, because of the wicked which are in the Church. For did *Noah* forsake the Arke because of *Cham*? Or *Peter* the Apostles ship because of *Iudas*? If there were not in the Church sinnes, what neede the Church pray for remission of sinnes? He that leaueth the Church because of the bad, is like to him that leaueth a delightfull garden full of pleasant flowers, because of bad weedes that do grow among them. A similitude

The third Chapter.

The badges and tokens of vndutiful children, shewed in the example of the prodigall childe.

THe lamentable condition of the father in the sonne, being thus premissed, and intreated of in generall: the history leadeth vs to a due regard of his grieuances in particular. And here beginneth the formall description of the sonne, his first image, rude, and vnperfect, and drawne out with a coale.

The mind of this man is known by his words, his mouth A man is

knowen by his wordes. mouth bewraieth what maner of man he is. As the Ephramites were knowne to bee Ephramites by their kinde of speech, being not able to pronounce *Shibboleth*: as the Damsell that kept the doore knewe *Peter* by his voyce, that hee was a man of Galilee: so commonlie mens workes are knowne by their wordes to be good or euill. If his heart be indighting of good matters, his tongue will bee the penne of a readie writer. The words are properlie the founde of the minde, and therefore as golde that hath not a good sound may be thought to be counterfeit: so the man that hath not a good sound cannot be perfect. *He that is of the earth speaketh earthlie*: and the mouth of a foole (sayeth the wisdome of *Salomon*) blurteth out foolishnesse. As a man by his blistered and exulcerate lippes is knowne to haue an Ague: so by our swelling and corrupt wordes we are knowne to haue an inward and spirituall Ague. If the Bell soundeth not orderlie without, the wheeles of the clocke are distempered within: our inwarde partes are out of frame, if our tongue runne riot and iarreth out of tune. A Brasen vessell that is emptie yeeldeth a cleare sounde, if thou beest emptie of vngodlie thoughts, thy voyce will not bee hoarse, but the Eccho will bee loude. Wherefore if thou wilt set a doore before thy deedes, set a watch before thy wordes, and doe not let open the doores of thy lippes, before thou knowest what words will enter out. A worde once out cannot bee called in, it is good therefore to weigh out wordes. To rappe out foolish

Iud.12.
Matt.26.
Psal.45.
A similitude
Iohn 3.
Prou.15.
A similitude
A similitude
A similitude

foolish wordes, and to excuse them thus: I thought not of them: is the propertie of a foole. Wherefore seeing wee iudge of a man by his wordes as of a Lion by his pawe, gesse we with our selues of this mans affection by his tearmes of presumption. For by his owne mouth wee will condemne him, as Christ did the bad seruant in the Gospell. He pleadeth lawe, and imperiously claimeth his portion as a debt which was due vnto him. *Father giue mee* (saith he) *the portion of the goods, that falleth vnto me.* A verie impudent and saucie sute, and therewithall vnreasonable. For what doth this motion insinuate else, but that hee is highlie conceited of himselfe, to bee of able gouernment to dispose his owne goods, to go at his libertie, and to doe what him list?

In this mans behauiour the guise and practise of vnruly children is plainlie to bee seene, such as this declining and almost consumed age plentifullie bringeth forth: for the name beeing chaunged, they so imitate his nature, as this argument seemeth properlie to bee made for them. Hee that is heere called the younger, is nowe a graue elder, and hath beene the father of innumerable children like vnto himselfe. As this boy choppeth Logicke, and peartlie communeth with his father for his share: so too manie wicked wagstrings will parley with their parents, and lowdlie and lewdlie debate theyr matters with them, saying with the ryotous rout in *Dauids* time: *Our tongues are our owne, wee ought to speake.* Psal. 12.

who is Lord ouer vs? But the Lorde hath his iudgements in ſtore for ſuch, and their damnation ſleepeth not.

The ſcope they driue at in all their expoſtulatorie and diſcontented tearmes, is the ſame which is the ſubſtance of this mans cauillation, his fathers inheritance. They are greedie of their golde, as a Crowe is of a Carrion, and in their immoderate luſte thereof, they can neither wayte their fathers death, or ſtaie his good leyſure: but they muſt needes inioy it out of hande, or elſe they are greatlie ſicke of the father, and doe long for his death, verifying and fulfilling this ſaying of the Poet.

Filius ante diem patrios inquirit in annos.

The ſonne would haue the father dead, that he might haue his golde.

Such iniquitie in the hearts of children in all degrees of people generallie preuaileth, ſuch corruption ruleth their affections, as verie fewe are found (howſoeuer they can diſſemble it for ciuill faſhion ſake,) that are not reaſonablie pleaſed in themſelues with their parents death: whether they bee rich to poſſeſſe their riches, or of poore eſtate, thereby to be eaſed of their charge.

2. Sam. 18

What incited *Abſalon* to that furie againſt his father, but his ambitious deſire of his fathers crowne and dignitie? But his deſperate deſignement eſcaped not due puniſhment: for the reuenging God ſnared him, and ſtrangled him with his own pride, the righteous God that by no meanes ſuffereth

the disobedience of children to their parents vnpu-
nished, made his knotted curled haire, the knots of
death, and to stand in stead of halters to choake
him vp. And so hanging by the hairie scalpe be-
tweene heauen and earth, vntill he was smitten vn-
to the ground by *Ioab*, and miserablie finished his
accursed life, he is left as an example to rebellious
children of feare & trembling. I pray God this ex-
ample may warne such children: that those who
tread in the selfe same steps, may in time take heed,
least iustly they bee whipped with the selfe same
stripes: And if it may be as well remembred, as it is
ill forgotten, it will curble their wilde and wicked
affections, and keepe them in obedience.

A dreadful example for disobedient children.

How they do walke in this mans path & imitate
his lewdnes if they do not surpasse it, it is easie to be
seene if you suruay the trickes, and fetches which
they vse to serue their owne turnes, to get to their
possession the inheritance, and right and substance
of their fathers. Some are taught to chalenge with
boldnes inough their legacie and portion that was
left them by their mother. Othersome do sue to be
ouerseers of their fathers, & to be tutors ouer them,
charging them with dotage with the sonnes of
Sophocles, that they are vnable to manage their
matters, & therfore they do craue the gouernment
of their goods, and ouersight of their persons.

Othersome do flatly charge them with iniustice,
and vnnaturall partialitie, that they worke not by a
rule, leuel & proportiõ in ỹ course of their affectiõs,
in heaping vpon one more thẽ on another without

iuſt occaſion: as if it were vnlawfull for *Iacob* to loue *Ioſeph* more then al his brethren, or for Chriſt to loue his diſciple *Iohn* more then the other of his fellow diſciples.

Diſobedient children are great gadders.

But as they are with this prodigall companion troubled and tormented with a greedie worme, which maketh them to gape with mouths ſo wide for their parents ſubſtance, buzzing like the flies that peſtered *Pharao* his Court, and could not bee driuen away, but they will ſtill returne, ſeaze, and prey vppon them: ſo are they alway of a gadding ſpirit, they are neuer well, but when they are ranging, and their feet ſtand vpon thornes vntil they be gone out of their parents houſe. They had rather be companions with vaine and lewd perſons, who may flatter them in their fondneſſe, then to be in preſence of their carefull parẽts, who may traine them vp in goodneſſe. They haue loſt that eare with *Malcus* that ſhould heare good counſell, and they followe with *Abſalon*, ſuch kinde of counſellors, as leade them to deſtruction.

A ſimilitude

Herein they doo reſemble the birds of the ayre, who, albeit they bee neuer ſo well tended in the cage, yet couet they to bee out, and to flie abroad, skipping too and fro, from one twigge vnto another. But the birds herein, do folow but the inſtinct of their naturall inclination which God hath giuen vnto them, whoſe naturall habitation is in the aire, neuer vſing to light vppon the grouud, but when hunger and needfull prouiſion of foode and other neceſſities driue them thereunto, and therefore are excuſed:

excused: but lewd children like monsters do putte off nature, coursing abroad, when nature teacheth them to abide at home, and therefore iustly and condignely are accused.

Doth not nature teach them there to abide most, where they haue most cause? there to liue, where they find greatest loue? and not to bereaue them of their comfort and solace in the ende of their life, who haue beene vnto them by such infinite troubles and vnspeakeable charges, the bginners, authors, & maintainers of their liues? See we not how A similitude spaniels waite diligently vpon their maisters, who do vse to feede them, and shall sommes giue no attendance vpon their deare parents, who not onely feede them, but do take such cares for them?

If the loue of parents, with all the loue againe that childrē can shew, can neuer be requited, take wee heede we turne not thankfulnesse into sinfulnesse, and obedience into stubburnnesse, and naturall loue into all vngodlie lust. *He that rendereth euill for good euill shall neuer* (saith the wise man) *depart out of his house.* Prou. 17.

Christ that desired that the fragments of the loues wherewith the people were sufficed in the wildernes, should be kept as a grateful remēbrance of that kindnes: no doubt would haue such maine and vnspeakable benefits which wee receiue from our parents to be in no wise forgotten. The sorrows which parents do sustaine for their children, beside the many cares of their well doing, as exceeding number are not to be rehearsed, which no doubt

as sharp arrowes would stick sore vnto their side
and would soone ouercome thē, were there not a
inward loue which ouerruled all, making them pa
tient and willing to endure them. The tender lo
2. Kin. 4 seated and rooted in their hearts, is like the mea
that *Elisha* the man of God did cast into the pott
whereby the sowernes & bitternes of death, whic
was in the pot was taken away, and their mea
made sauorie and sweete vnto them. The rega
whereof if children were not graceless might r
uish their affections, & retaine them in obedienc
and keepe them at home, and weane them fro
their wilde and wanton vagaries, ietting and iau
ting like a Post to & fro, who staieth not in a plac
alwayes turning vp and downe like an hour-gla
that is turned euerie houre.

The fourth Chapter.

*Of the ignorance and want of knowledge of his hap
estate in his fathers house, the grand cause of h
departure from the house: vnder which the dan
rous effects of our ignorance, and the happy fru
of the knowledge of Gods worde are specified a
expressed.*

THere was no occasion giuen him
his father why hee should so much d
like to bee in presence with his fath
Thy destruction O Israel is of thy se
He might haue pleaded iudicially with his f
as hee did sometimes with the children of Isr
so

saying in this wise: *O my people what haue I done vnto thee, or wherein haue I grieued thee, testifie agaynst me?* Mich. 6

Could his sonne alledge agaynst him his vnnaturall inclemencie, his vnkinde intreatie, his want of thinges necessarie? Coulde hee dispute for his departure from his father, as *Iacob* did for his departure from his vncle when hee speaketh thus, *I will depart, for Laban his countenance is not towards me now as it was yesterday and three dayes agoe?* Gen. 30. Was hee so seruilelie detained in obsequie, as he should so inordinatelie affect this libertie? No no, let God bee true, and euerie man elsse a lyar, that he may be iustified in his sayings, and cleare when he is iudged. Psal. 50

It was his foolishnesse, and want of experience being the yonger brother, which opened the window vnto all mishappes, and violentlie did throwe him into all extremities. He was as a blinde man who coulde not iudge of colours, as a fleshlie man who conceyueth not the thinges that are of God.

As the Swallowes doung did strike *Tobias* blinde: so his fathers bags, the riches of this world, which the Apostle calleth doung, bereaued him of the eyes and sight of his mind. Wordlie men want eyes to see the light of God, and the blessinges that they loose, and the daungers that they runne into thereby. They are as dimme sighted as *Helie* the Priest, who could not see the bright lampe of God burning in the Temple. A similitu Tob 2. Phil 3

Wherfore I.bor thou for the knowledge of God, and thou ſhalt bee moſt happie. Then wilt thou with *Dauid* deſire to dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the dayes of thy life, and to viſite his holie Temple. For in his houſe is the fulneſſe of ioy, and at his right hande is aboundance of pleaſures for euermore.

The knowledge of god aboue all.

In worldlie affaires we haue much knowledge. We can iudge well of the price of Pearles, of the differences of cloath, of the vertue of ſimples, hearbes and plantes, and of earthly commodities: but of matters of fayth, of grounds of Religion, of the things belonging to the kingdome of God, we are either altogither or verie rudely ignorant. The ſimilitude eyes of our mindes are like to Mowles eyes, who can ſee ſufficientlie to grouell in the earth: but aboue the earth they are ſtarke blinde, and can ſee nothing. To deceiue our brother, and to make cunning bargains to oppreſſe one another, to ſcrape togither the muck of the world, we are wiſe inough: but whileſt we are thus wiſe we becom fooles, as the
1. maiſter of the Gentiles teacheth vs, whileſt we pre-
ferre myre before pearles, earth before heauen,
8. filthie ſwine before Ieſus Chriſt, as the Gergeſins did and neglect and deſpiſe our owne ſaluation.

As the knowledge of God is all happines, ſo the ignorance of him is all vnhappineſſe.

The Pſalmiſt pointing out the palpable ignorãce of god & his word which was in his people, maketh it the conſequence of al confuſion. *They knewe not* (ſaith he) *they did not vnderſtand*, & what folowed?

All the foundations of the earth are out of course.

The Prophet *Esay* speaking of the peoples captiuity, sheweth that their ignorance was the cause therof. *My people was led into captiuity, because they had no knowledge.* Esai.5

Moses lamenting the pitiful estate of the distressed Iewes, praieth vnto God to giue them knowledge, to indue them with a wise and vnderstanding heart. *Oh* (saith hee) *that they were wise,* Deut.22 *and woulde vnderstand, and would consider their latter ende.*

What was the ruine and downfall of the Iewes, and ouerthrow of the Temple but their carelesnes in religion, their neglect of Gods seruice, their want of knowledge? as Christ himselfe in direct wordes witnesseth when he saith: *They shal not leaue a stone vpon a stone, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* Luke.19

Infelix homo qui scit omnia, te autem nescit: beatus autẽ qu te scit etiamsi illa nesciat: qui vero & te & illa nouit non propter illa beatior, sed propter te solum beatus est. Aug.lib.5 confess ca.4 Vnhappie man is hee, who knoweth all thinges, and knoweth not thee: happy man that knoweth thee, though hee knoweth nothing else: but he that knoweth thee, and all things else, is not for them the happier, but for thee only is he blessed: saith Saint *Austine.* The knowledge of God is a bridle to our lustes, and the ignorance of God is a couer to our sinnes. The knowledge of God is like vnto a clocke, whereby thou maiest know howe thy life is spent. It is like vnto a wande which serueth to beate the dust out of our cloathing

A similitude

A similitude

A similitude

cloathing, it beateth out the pride & presumption of out sinnes.

Wherefore giue thou diligence to knowe God, not barely, confusedly, and ingrosse as doe the Diuels, who do beleeue and tremble: but particularlie in his attributes, and speciall properties, that do belong vnto him. Know his goodnesse who loued thee, when thou louedst not him, who came from heauen to saue thee, who spilt his bloud vppon the earth to redeeme thee, who rose againe to iustifie thee, who went vp againe to heauen to prepare a place for thee. Know his power, that thou maist feare him, and his mercie that thou maist not despaire of him.

The knowledge of God is to be sought out of his word.

Exod. 3

Matth. 17

Wouldest thou knowe God? see what thou art to him, and what hee is to thee, and thou shalt knowe him. Put off thy shoes as *Moses* did, doe away thy carnall and worldly lustes, and thou shalt talke with him. When Christ would giue a sight to his disciples of his glory, he led them vp aloft to the mount of Tabor. We must ascend vp on high with heauenly meditations, if we would attaine to a profound knowledge of him. If thou wouldest knowe by what means thou shouldst get this knowledge, hear what Christ counselleth thee. *Search the scriptures, for in them yee shall haue eternall life. In his quasi in quodã speculo homo seipsum considerare potest, qualis sit, vel quò tendat. Qui vult cũ deo semper esse, frequenter debet orare & legere: nam cũ oramus ipsi cum deo loquimur, cum legimus deus nobis cum loquitur.* In the scriptures (saith saint *Augustin*) as it

Iohn 5

Aug. de temp. Tom. 10. de feria sexta post Dominicam passionis

were

were in a glasse, wee may beholde ourselues what we are, & whither we tend. He that will be alwaies conuersant with God, he often must pray, & must read often: for when we pray we speake with God, and when we read God speaketh with vs.

Now for the better vnderstanding of this word, which traineth vs vp to this perfect knowledge, we must repaire to the priests lips, who do keep knowledge, for he is the messenger of the high God, and the disposer of these secret mysteries. For wee cannot of our selues vnderstand what we read without an interpreter, as the chamberlain of Queene *Candace* flatly answered *Philip*. To which his iudgment saint *Paul* subscribeth his consent, saying. *How can they beleeue on him, of whome they haue not heard? how can they heare without a preacher? howe can he preach vnlesse he be sent?* Must he be therefore sent? *Oh pray we the Lorde of the haruest that hee woulde send out more laborers into his haruest. Homo enim sine doctore, est vt cæcus sine ductore.* A man without a preacher, is as hee that is blinde without a leader, which can neuer find the way. For our darknes is like the Egyptian darknes, grosse, and palpable; so huge and monstrous as for three daies together, no man could see his brother, or once moue out of the place wherin he was before, we know not what we doe, while we open our eares to vaine wordes, and shut them against the wordes of eternall life. *They that are of God* (saith our Sauiour Christ) *will heare Gods word.* And hee concludeth that such as are otherwise affected are not of God.

The necessity of preaching the word.

Mal. 2

Actes. 8

Rom. 10

Matth. 9

August. li

Exod. 10

Iohn. 8

When

Similitude

When a man diſcourſeth of the gold of *India*, of ſuch things which he ſawe, or readeth of in hiſtories touching the ſame, ſuch as haue a purpoſe to trauel thither, wil diligently harken to that which he ſhal report: but others who neuer look to haue doings there, care not what he ſaith, nor will take no heed thereto. So when as we preach to men, of God, of the kingdome of heauen, of the treaſures which God hath laid vp in ſtore, for them that loue him: ſuch as haue a deſire to goe to heauen, to ſee God face to face, to bee partaker of his ioyes, will giue eare to the preaching of his holy word: but ſuch as haue no mind euer to come thither, account not at al of our labour, and miniſtry, and make no conſcience in hearing our preachings.

The eſtate of this people is exceeding daungerous, and the contempt of Gods worde is the next dore to damnation it ſelfe. The Pſalmograph touching the moſt perillous eſtate and extremitie of the Iſraelites, ſaith that when their ſoule abhorred all kind of meat, they were next vnto deaths dore. As the outward man without outward meate periſheth: ſo the inward man without his inward and ſpirituall foode decaieth. This is another meate then wee are aware of, and the want of this exceedeth far the want of other meat.

Therefore God by the mouth of *Amos* threatning an intolerable and moſt fearefull famine, hee ſaith, hee will not ſende a famine of bread, but a famine of the worde of God, the breade of eternall life.

This

This breade in vertue infinitelie surmounteth all other kindes of breade, and delicates whatsoeuer. What Nectar and Ambrosia may compare with this? Is there any mortal meat that is so restoratiue, that it can reduce the dead to life againe? it cherisheth and refresheth vs whilest we are aliue, but it auaileth vs nothing when wee are deade. But the word of God nourisheth our dead soules, and raiseth them vp from their dead works to serue the liuing God.

Ezechiel verie plainely teacheth so much by a liuely demonstration of drie bones, which the Prophet by the mighty power of the worde, brought from death to life againe. There is no sinner so obdurate by a long continued habit, and custome of sinne, and hath lien so long dead, as hee stinketh with *Lazarus* in his coffin and graue through the corruption of his sinnes: but he may bee mollified, changed and reclaimed, & finally reuiued, and raised vp, and restored to the church, as *Lazarus* to his friendes by the heauenlie voice of Christ. *Ezech.* 37

Let no man therefore proceed so far in extreame impietie, as in their great danger of vtter shipwrack in the sea of this world, to forsake this anchor hold their onely succour, and the hornes of the Altar which they must lay hold vpon.

Adam after his grieuous and dangerous fall, had no small benefit by hearing of the word. *I hearde* (saith he) *thy voice in the gardē*, for he was comforted with the promise of saluation by our Sauiour Christ the seede of the woman that should breake *Gen.* 3

the

the ſerpents head.

A ſimilitude. The ciuill magiſtrate firſt of all puniſheth a roague, and ſturdy vagabonde with the whip: but the ſecond time more grieuouſlie by cutting off his eares: but if hee take him hauing loſt his eares as a horrible offendor in the higheſt degree hee putteth him to death. So if thou wilt not amend with the Lordes ſtripes he wil further grieue, and vexe thee with Scorpions: and if as a runnagate from his preſence, he findeth thee without eares to liſten to his words, he will prepare the inſtrumentes of death to grind thy hairy ſcalpe.

Prou. 7 Therefore deere Chriſtian bee in time warned, that thou maiſt be wel armed. Call wiſdom thy ſiſter, and vnderſtanding thy kinſwoman. Seeke for heauenly knowledge, as thou ſeekeſt for earthlie gold, and it ſhall bee giuen thee. So ſhalt thou not ſwarue with the prodigall ſonne, from thy fathers commandements, but thy ſoule ſhall ſtil dwell and inherit the land, thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with the plenteouſneſſe of his houſe as out of a riuer.

Let vs therefore open the eies of our ſoules, that wee may ſee our horrible and abhominable ignorance the helliſh fiend and furie of our ſoules. Let vs pray with *Dauid* and ſay. *Open mine eies O lord, that I ſleepe not in death, Giue me vnderſtanding, & I ſhall ſearch thy lawe, yea I ſhall keepe it with my whole heart.* Endue vs more and more with knowledge, that thy coũſels may be deere vnto vs, ſweeter then the hony, or the hony combe. Then ſhall wee enter into thy gates with praiſe, and into thy

Pſal. 13

Pſal. 119

Pſal. 119

courts

courts with thanks. Our feet shall stande still in thy gates *oh Hierusalem*, & we shal walke before thee, all the daies of our life. Those foure holy beastes which *Ezechiel* did see, were full of eies, because they were full of the knowledge of God, and what saith the scripture? *They walked before his face.* Lord giue vs eies & we shall walke in all true waies, and al false waies we shal vtterly abhor. We shal walke before thy face, and not take our vagaries with this wandring wight, after our wicked pleasures, & this grace, the Lord giue vs for his holy names sake. Ezech. 1

The fift Chapter.

Of selfe loue, pride, and presumption, another cause of his departure from his father.

IT appeareth by the proude petition of his portion, that he had a great cõceit, & opinion of himselfe, that hee was enough able without his fathers helpe if he were at his own hand to dispose of himself. And this his selfe loue was the beginning of his sinne, the breeder of his bane, and the roote from whence all his flowing mischiefe sprung.

Pride and selfe loue is the fountaine of al vice, and the enemie of all vertue. Trees that are planted in mountaines and high places do sooneſt loose their leaues, and beautifull blossomes, through the violence of the winds. Pride and selfe loue the cause all euill. A similitu

A man that looketh downe from a steepe high A similit

tower,

tower, hath neede of a staied and well ordered braine, or else he may soone be in danger of falling.

a similitude In fishermens nets the frie, and Menowes, and smaller fish run thorow, when as the greater cānot passe the net. The proud and great men and Princes of Hierusalem were taken prisoners, and by *Nabuchadnezzar* led into Babilon, when the base and meaner people generally were enlarged, and set at libertie. In the mountaine of Gelboa, *Saule* & his armorbearer, and the proud princes of Israell fell vpon the sworde. High mindes exalted with pride vnto heauen, shall bee throwne downe to Hell.

Other sinners do depart from God, for commodity or pleasure: but the vaine proude man without anie of them both groweth graceless, and past shame, and willinglie renounceth euen God himselfe.

A similitude Wherefore slaie this Serpent in the egge, and tame this Iade which will otherwise cast thee in thy iourney to Hierusalem, whilest hee is a Colt. Cut down this euil weed as soon as he sprouteth out as it were in the first grasse, before it bladeth and groweth higher.

A similitude Selfe loue is the captain which giueth the onset, and maketh all the parts of the body and the mind to wait vpon it; and is like the heart that is in the body, which commandeth the flesh, the sinewes, and the veines

He that loueth himselfe more then God, is like a similitude traitor in the highest degree, that deserueth to loose both

both life and goods.

A similitude

A man that standeth vpon his owne will, and resolueth with himselfe, *This will I doe*: is like a rude fellowe brought vp at home, that preferreth his base and beggarly house of claie, before the statelieſt Princes pallace, that is builte of Marble.

There is nothing that hurteth so much as the hauing of our wils; ouerthrowe this foundation, and the proud wals of Hierico, our worldly pleasures wil come tumbling down.

Two loues, do builde two Cities: the one is the loue of God which buildeth & setteth vp the contempt of thy selfe; the other is the loue of thy selfe, which frameth, and erecteth a contempt of God. Betwixt these two, God, and thy selfe, standeth thy wil: the nearer thou art vnto thy selfe, ỹ further thou art from God: and the nearer thou art to him, thou art further from thy selfe. Therfore the Apostle saying before that nothing should separate him from the loue of God: it was no maruaile that he said afterward, *Our cõuersation is in heauẽ*. He loued God much, and therefore hee loued himselfe but little. Wherefore subdue and kil thy selfe loue if thou wilt haue God to abide in thy soule. For *Herod* must be dead, before that Christ will returne into Iudea: the tyrannous law of sinne that ruleth in thy members must be truly mortified, before thou canst enioy the presence of Gods spirit.

Rom. 8.

Phil. 3

Mat. 2.

Wherefore *Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred & from thy fathers house*: as the Lorde

Gen. 12.

willed *Abraham*: & embrace this sweet counsaile which the holy spirit giueth thee to the same effect saying: *Harke ô daughter, & consider, encline thine eare, forget thine own kindred, & thy fathers house: so shall the king haue pleasure in thy beauty, for he is thy Lord God, and worship thou him.*

Psal. 46

If we haue departed from our fathers house, the church of the liuing God, and haue forsaken God, to follow *Ashtaroth*, and haue peruerted the words of Christes prayer and haue saide: *Not thy will, but our willes be doone heere vpon earth*: If with this sinner wee haue preferred our owne vngodlie lusts, before gods holy lawes: if we returne not with him in the end, our ende wil be worser then his beginning was. *For if we liue after the flesh wee shall die.* Wherfore follow we not *Saul* who fauored *Agag*, and put him in prison, when he was commanded to put him to death. Let vs not keepe our affections within vs as close prisoners, seeing God hath charged vs to mortifie and destroy them.

Gal. 5.

1. Sam. 15

Against the Politicians of these times.

There bee too many sensuall and carnall spirits, who in these dreadful daies of security, wherein we now liue, do leane too much to the broken reede of Egypt, and do run vnto the mountaines of Samaria, relying wholy without respect of religion, and care of conscience vppon outwarde policie, carnall wisdom, & humane reasons; doing what they wil, and not what they should, loathing Manna which they loue not, and sauoring only of the grosse meat of Egypt which they should not. If they proceede not so farre because they dare not, as with *Nabal*

and

and *Dauids* foole to say, *There is no God*: but doe confesse him with their lips: yet they doe vtterlie denie him in their hearts, they are reprobate and abhominable, and to euery good worke vnprofitable. But howsoener they flatter themselues a while in their wicked thoughts, with their present prosperity, thinking, as railing *Rabsakah*, that our God deceiueth vs in whom we trust: the time shal come when they shal howle and mourn for the miserable aduersity which shal com vpō thē: for they are but fatted to the day of destruction, as weathers and Capons, and other fowles are against a great feast, which is a great day of slaughter.

The sixt Chapter.

Of his hastines and rashnes, not hauing a wise foresight, and prospect to the end: another cause of his departure from his father.

MAn being in honour hath no vnderstanding, but is cōpared vnto the beastes that perish, saith the kingly Prophet. This harebrained young man, by his rashnes and foolishnes, ran himself violently into al vnhappines. He was *Epimetheus*, & not *Prometheus*, afterward wise, when his former folly had taught him more wisdom. If there had been any wisdome or discretion in his doinges, he would haue weighed the ende with the beginning, and woulde haue aswell thought vppon the future daungers, as hee did vppon the present pleasures of his sinnes. Psal. 49

But his humor was so stirring, and he was so rashly resolute, as he was fullie bent vpon his present delight; neither fearing nor caring for any sorrow that
similitude might ensue, not vnfitly resembling such foolish idle boyes, who wil venture a whipping rather then they will loose one iote of their pastime with their gamesome companions.

That which a wise man doth in the beginning, a foole doth commonly in the latter ending. It is the part of wisdom to forecast al things, but folly doth euery thing without any regard.

dom 8 When the woman that was taken in adulterie by the Iewes, was conuented by them before our Sauiour Christ, and they appealed to his iudgment for hir due punishment: hee stooped downe, and with his finger did write vpon the grounde, before hee woulde denounce anie doome against her. Whereby he insinuateth that we shoulde not rashly determine of a thing, but deliberatelie debate and demur vpon the case, and point at euerie circumstance which hangeth thereupon, with the finger of discretion.

Wisdome, and foresight doe preuent such euils, which vsually do follow our folly, and rashnes.

Exod. 19 When the Israelites came to *Moses* to be resolued, in any doubtful and perplexed matters, *Moses* did take time to consider of an aunswere, and did leaue them in suspence, vntil he had conferred with the Lord about them, & was certified of his mind. If we woulde do the like, and especially when wee feele any motion vnto sin, as to a priuate reuenge,

to

to any ambition, couetousnes, or vncleanesse, wee would first aske counsell at the Lords mouth, and stay our affections, vntill we heare his iudgement and precepts concerning them: we should curble our iniquities, and not commit such filthinesse, with such greedines as we do.

Dauid was a wise man, and what is said of him? *I considered* (saith he) *my waies, and I turned my feet vnto thy testimonies*. But truely *Balaam* was an Asse, and more foolish then his asse, for his asse stood stil at the Lords commandement, when the asse his master would haue pricked him forwarde against his expresse will. *Psal.7* *Num.22*

Wherefore walke we circumspectlie, as the Apostle aduiseth vs, doing nothing rashlie, but first let vs trie what is the good will of God acceptable and perfect. *Rom.12*

Iosua thorough hastinesse, giuing credite to the forged suggestions of the Gibeonites, not asking counsel of the Lord before, was beguiled by them. We shall deceiue our selues, if we trust our own affections, and be not wise, and considerate in our actions. *Iosue.9*

The Virgine *Marie* woulde not hastilie make aunswere to the Angell, greeting her from GOD with a ioyfull salutation, before she communed with hir soule about his wordes, and had pondered in hir heart, what kinde of salutation the same should be. *Luke.1*

If wee are not rashlie to beleeue euerie spirit, but by the rule, and Canon of the Apostle, *wee are* *1.Iohn.4*

first to trie the spirits, whether they bee of God or no: wee are plainely taught thereby to examine our thoughts, & to deliberate vpon our doings, before we do attempt them.

A similitude. When a man falleth from the toppe of an high Turret, it may be supposed, that desperately hee did cast himself headlong from the same: but it will not be so thought, if hee descendeth by degrees, by the staues of a ladder, and commeth downe aduisedly by equall steps and paces: thou canst not doe amisse, if thou proceedest iudicially in thy actions, and by the orderly degrees of discretion, doest foresee, and discusse such euents as may befal them. If thou beest so rashly wedded to thy will, as thou wilt not change it vppon better aduise; if like to *Reboboam*, thou refusest the iudgement of the grauer sort, and inclinest to the motions of the yonger company, permitting thy selfe to bee led by the line of thy youthfull affections: it will fall out ill with thee, as it did with *Reboboam*, and the dammage shall bee great which thou shalt sustaine thereby. For as *Achab* set vppon a will to goe to war, and obstinatelie withstanding *Micheas* his good counsaile, inhibiting this his purpose, fell in the battell, beeing wounded vnto the death: so must thou needes miscarrie, if thou beest obdurate against all perswasions, and franticklie followest thine owne inclinations, against all admonitions. 3. *Kin.* 21.

Wherefore if such motions arise in thy minde, as doe intice thee to cast off the yoke of thy heauenly

uenly father his discipline from thy neck, if with this lasciuious and wanton yong man, thou beest minded to forsake, and giue ouer his house, the church of the liuing God, and with *Demas* to imbrace this present euill worlde, ranging after the lustes of thy flesh, and of thy minde: take example by him, and by his ende consider of thy ende, for if thou walkest after his pleasures, bee assured with thy selfe that thou shalt taste of his sorrowes.

Consider therefore of the end without ende, and thou shalt liue without ende. The pleasure is short that delighteth vs here; and the tormentes are infinite which shal torment vs elsewhere.

If *Esau* had respected and regarded the ende, he had neuer made bill of sale of his birthright to his brother for a messe of pottage, which he could not redeem, & purchase again with a fountain of tears.

If *Iudas* had wel considered of the ende, hee had neuer for a base bribe betraied the Lorde of life, for the which villainy he could not make amendes, no not with his life.

What was the occasion of the subuersion of Hierusalem, but their secure neglect, and forgetfulnes of the ende? they woulde not know their time as Christ obiecteth to them, of their visitation. *Luke.19*

This was the bane of this branficke boy, who desperatelie plunged himselfinto perdition, hauing no foresight and forecast of the ende. And this wil be our downfall, if our heedefull diligence in time doth not preuent it. For we are so tickled with the toyes of this world, and we are more allured with

our present short pleasures, then with al the endles, and vnspeakeable ioies, which are promised vnto vs in the kingdom of heauen.

The outward shew and brauery of this worlde, doth carry vs with this prodigall and lost childe, from our fathers house. And the cause of it is this, because we are delighted with this present beauty, and do not foresee his future deformity. For the vn cleannes of it (as *Hieremie* saith of Hierusalem) is in hir feet.

Dan.3 The worlde is like *Nabuchadnezzar* his image, whose head and foreparts were of gold, but ỹ legs, and end of it was of clay. Worldly pleasures in the beginning doe shine like gold, but in the end they appeare as they are, to bee nothing but earthlie.

a similitude They doe blaze like a candle for a time, but when like a Candle that is burnt vnto the socket, they come neare vnto their ende, they are extinguished with a very noisome sauour.

This world giueth the best first, as the gouernor

Iohn.2 of the feast at the mariage in Canaan, gaue the best wine first. It is the nature of the worlde, to giue a good dinner, but a light supper: alwaies the least commeth at the last, and the worst in the end.

Wherefore drinke thou not of the worlds *Circean* and inchaunted cup. The whore of Babilon, tempered hir poison of fornication in a cuppe of gold, wherewith she made drunken al the princes of the earth. Take thou heede thereof, for howsoeuer it seemeth pleasant at the first taste, there is death in the pot., bitternesse is in the end, it leadeth thee

thee directlie vnto hell. Buy not thou therefore repentance so deare, when thou maist purchase heauen at a cheaper rate. For art thou so madde to desire hurtfull things, and to runne thy selfe willinglie into extreame danger, being admonished of it.

If whilest thou art in thy iourney trauailing by the way, one should meete thee, who shoulde tell thee of theeues and robbers who doe beset that way, whither thou art going, wouldest thou not turne backe, or crosse another way? I know that thou wouldest. This life of ours, is nothing but a way, wherein wee walke for a certaine time. It hath beene tolde vs often, that manie theeues doe lie in the middle way betweene this worldlie Hiericho, and our heauenlie Hierusalem, who lurke in the theeuish corners of the streetes to murther the innocent, to robbe vs of our goods, euen the good graces of God, and to take away our liues: will wee not therefore take heede hereof, and take no other course. A similitude

Therefore assoone as anie temptation dooth arise, consider in the beginning, vnto what daunger it may leade thee in the ende. Take it by the ende, as *Iacob* tooke *Esau* by the feete, and by the ende.

Haue God alwaies before thine eyes, and thou canst not doe amisse, so saith *Dauid*. *I did set God before mine eyes, therefore I can not faile: wherefore my heart is glad, and my tongue reioyceth, my flesh also doth rest in hope.* Psa. 16

The Mathematicians doe esteeme the circular figure

figure, as the perfect figure, because in a circle the beginning and the ende doe meete togither; therfore that we may bee made perfect, let vs in all actions, lay the beginning, and the ende togither. And let God who is the *Alpha* and beginning: be *Omega* vnto vs, and the ending likewise. And let vs account all things but doung to gaine Iesus Christ: so shall we abide alwayes in our fathers house, and our trust shall bee in the tender mercie of God for euer and euer.

Phil. 3

The seuenth Chapter.

What the prodigall sonne did when hee had receyued his portion from his father.

Psal. 61

IF *riches increase, set not your heart theron*, saith the heauenly Psalmist. It is great riches not to couet riches, and he possesseth much who desireth little. To be worldly rich is to be verie poore: to be poore in spirit is the greatest riches. That must needes be vaine whose ende is vaine, and we ought to haue that in greatest detestation, which hindereth the course of our eternall saluation. And this riches do. For as the Falcon that is full gorged, will not come to the lure: so will not we in our worldly prosperitie seeke after God. For God is lost in prosperitie, and found in aduersitie.

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k found
luersity.

The prodigall sonne, when he had got wealth at will, did shake off all obedience, and compassed

sed the worlde, trauailed vnto the vttermost coasts of the earth, as farre as there was ground, and as farre as he could from his fathers house.

He is carried farre that rideth vpon the diuell: for sinne leadeth him, furie and rebellion spurreth him forward. *Regio longinqua* (saith *Augustine*) *fuit obliuio dei.* The farre country which he sought, was his heart farre from God, his vtter forgetfulnes of his fathers seruice. *Aug quæst. euang. quæst. 33.*

He went far from God by his sin and wickednes: For by godly obedience we draw neer to God, & by the contrarie, he departed farre from him.

He departed farre from him. First of all by an opposite and farre differing disposition, God his *Volo*, being his *Nolo*, his will being his nill, and so of the contrarie: omitting that which hee shoulde commit, and doing that which should be vndone, preposterously peruerting and disordering Gods precepts, making them negatiue which are affirmatiue, and affirmatiue which he hath negatiuelie propounded. How we are said to go far from God.

Of this departure our Sauiour Christ speaketh, vsing the selfe same phrase of speech in the same sence, taxing the hypocrisie of the Scribes and Pharisies. *This people draweth neere vnto mee with their lippes: but their hearts are verie farre from mee.* When as wee see two sitting and talking togither, and the one varieth from the other in opinion: wee vse to say that the one of them is farre from the other. And in this respect maye this prodigall sonne, and euerie sinner bee properlie *Matth.* 15.

saide

saide to go farre from God.

Secondlie, he is saide to haue gone farre: in regarde of the great and manie sinnes hee did commit, which the more they were, the further they did lead him. For euerie sinne being a manifest defection and departure from God: they may bee rightlie said to depart lesser or further, the lesser or more sinnes they doe commit. As he may bee said to go further then an other, that taketh more paces or greater then another.

A similitude

This mischiefe was in his farre departure, that the further he went, the lesser reckoning hee made of his father. There was nowe such a space by his farre trauaile betweene the obiect and the sence, betweene his eye, and his fathers house, as his sight failed him, the onely great God did nowe seeme the least to his carnall eyes. For a thing which is great in his owne nature, if we behold it farre off, seemeth little vnto vs. Our eye beames the further they are dilated and extended, the thinner they seeme, and at the last they vanish quite away, and are no more seene. The Sunne which by the learned iudgement of Astronomers, is farre greater then the earth, being so farre distant, and remooued from our eyes, seemeth but of a foote or two bignesse vnto vs.

A similitude

Is not our case the same? Haue not we all like lost sheepe departed from the Church, the sheepefold of the Lord, and from Iesus Christ the great sheepheard of our soules, who would, if we woulde haue remained with him, safely brought vs into the greene

greene paſtures, and would haue led vs to the wa-
ters of comfort? Haue not wee all of vs gone ve-
rie farre from him by wilfull diſobedience, ſtarting
a ſide like a broken bowe? Haue we not followed
euen our owne luſtes, and made little reckoning
of God, and his religion? It is too manifeſt that wee
haue. And what hath beene the occaſion of all
this? but onelie becauſe wee haue beene glutted
and ſurfeited with Gods goodneſſe: God hath too
liberallie dealt vs out our portions, and wee haue
beene too proude of our ouermuch proſperitie.
Vngodlie men we are, who haue turned the grace of Iude.
our God into wantonneſſe, and haue denied God the
onelie Lord, *and our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.*

As this was the iniquitie and ouerthrowe of So-
dome, fulneſſe of bread, and idleneſſe: ſo worldlie
felicitie is our onlie infelicitie, the onelie Carbuncle
and deſtruction of our ſoule. As the ſerpent will A ſimilitude
kill them with his poyſon, which culled him, and
cheriſhed him with their heate: ſo worldly goods,
which through the immoderat heat of our minds
we doe gather togither, will gnawe our conſci-
ences, and like a greedie worme that neuer dyeth
will euer bee feeding vpon our bodies, and our
ſoules.

My elect people (ſaith God) *waxed fat*: and Deut. 32
what then, *they forſooke God that made them, and*
regarded not the ſtrong God of their ſaluation. The
Prophet *Eſay* taketh vp the ſelfe ſame complaint, Eſai. 5
ſaying: *The* Harp, *the Timbrell, & the Pipe, are in*
their feaſts: but they reſpect not the woorke of the
Lord,

Lord, neither do they consider the operation of his hands. If the people doe but sit downe to eate, and drink, we heare by and by that they rise vp to play.

Exod. 32

Wherefore if thou hast a minde to serue God, set not thy minde vpon this present euill worlde. Thou canst not looke vp to heauen with one eye, and vppon the earth with the other at one time. *Dagon* cannot stande before the Arke of God; wee cannot worship God and the Idoll of this worlde. One thing is necessarie, as Christ telleth *Martha.*

We cannot inioy God & the world togither.

Luke. 10

A similitude

If thou grauest with one knife, or sewest with one needle, thou shalt ridde and dispatch a great deale more worke, then thou shouldest if thou wroughtest with two togither, for one of them will hinder an other: so much riches will hinder thy religion, and the further thou goest from the world the neerer thou commest vnto God.

There be manie Cities and townes corporate, which are endowed with customs & priuiledges, differing from others: yet are they not so contrarie, but one may haue the freedome of diuerse of them at once: But Babylon and Hierusalem, heauen and earth, God and Mammon, are at such mortall and deadlie foade togither, as they may not be matched and combined togither. We cannot bea free Denison in heauen aboue, and be a bond seruant to this wicked world beneath. *There can be no fellowship betweene righteousnesse and vnrighteousnesse: no societie with light and darkenes, no vnitie and agreement with God and Beliall. We cannot*

2. Cor. 6

be

be partakers of the table of the Lord, and of the ta- 1. Cor. 10
ble of Diuels. We read in holie scriptures how the
Samaritanes would haue confounded these extre- 2. King. 17
mities, and mangled Gods religion, and mingled
therewithall their idolatrous superstitions.

Naaman the Syrian was such a kinde of 2. King. 5
fellowe: hee was content to offer incense, and
sacrifice to God: but with it hee woulde keepe
still the fauour of his Prince, and the credite of his
place, he woulde repaire betweene times with his
maister into the house of *Rimmon*.

Nicodemus was willing to be a professor, and Iohn. 3
to becom Christs disciple, but he would not come
by day, but by stealth in the night, for feare of the
Iewes, of the losse of his authoritie, and good estate
in this world.

The gallaunt young Gentleman, that shewed Matth. 19
so much zeale of the Kingdome of heauen, as
if hee had meaned presentlie to haue gone thi-
ther, woulde not depart with his worldlie pos-
sessions for the purchase of that kingdome. Hee
was of that mind, to haue heauen and the world, or
to haue no heauen at all. But this could not bee, for
they are two imperious, and contrarie maisters, Matth. 6
whom no man can serue togither at one time.

As the people of Israel neuer had Manna, and Exod. 16
the flesh pottes of Egypt at one tyme: so is it
not permitted vs to taste at one time of the de-
lightes of heauen, and the pleasures of the worlde:
for the loue of the one breedeth the loathsomnesse
of the other,

As

A similitude

As the stomacke, if it be distempered with rawe humours, it cannot relish well sauourie meate: so our soules, ouerburdened with worldlie grosse affections, we cannot taste of heauenly consolations.

Exod 3

When as *Pharaoh* gaue commaundement to the Hebrew people to offer sacrifice to their god in Egypt: *Moses* made answere, that it could not so be. *Shall we* (saith he) *offer vnto God the abhominations of the Egyptians?*

Iohn. 2

When Iesus entred into the Temple of Hierusalem, and chased out the prophane Marchants and copesmates from thence: hee did by that example, not obscurely teach vs, that there is no roome for such in the Church, whose godlines is their gaine, who trade themselues wholie to the affaires of this worlde. Inasmuch therefore as this mans prosperitie puft him vp with pride, and drew his heart farre from his due obedience to his gracious father: let vs that stand take heed least we fall: and greatly stande in feare, that when the worlde fauoureth vs, the diuell will most tempt vs, and estrange our hearts from the seruice of God.

Let vs not therefore, for the loue of our earthlie and worldly portion, forsake our heauenlie father who is a better portion His house is little Zoar, the

Gen. 19.

citie of refuge, vnto which *Lot* fled, and was preserued when Sodome was destroyed. In his house are many dwellings, his house is made of golde, and his gates of precious stones. If we abide there, we shall haue riches at our desire. For riches and plentiousnesse is in his house, and at his righ hande

are

are aboundant pleasures for euermore.

When as *Gorgias* came in battell against *Iudas*, and *Iudas* made his solemne oration to the Iewes that were in the camp, among other things which he charged them, hee peremptorily commaunded them, that they should not be too greedie of the spoile of their enemies, but should stande to it like men, and first fight manfully & ouercome the enemie, & there would be time afterward inough and inough, to diuide the pray among them: so forasmuch as our life is a warfare, and we fight not only against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against worldly powers, against spiritual wickednes which is in high places, let vs not too couetously seeke worldly wealth. Let vs first gird vs with our swords vpon our thighes, and march against our enemies, the world, the flesh & the diuel: let vs first kill them who seeke to kill vs. and after the victorie and conquest is ours, we shal all of vs in heauē with ioy and gladnes diuide the spoyle among vs. 1. Mac. 4 Ephes. 6

The eight Chapter.

Of the waste which the prodigall sonne made of his portion: Vnder which how transitorie worldly ryches are, euidently is declared.

THe holie Prophet well perceiuing the bias of the world, how fondly it is fixed vpon imaginarie pleasures, & momentanie delights, thus grauely & vehementlie

hementlie reprœueth their fœlishnes: *O ye sons of*
Psal.4 *men, how long wil ye blasspheme mine honor, and haue*
such pleasure in vanitie, and seeke after leasing? He
accounteth worldly pleasures but vanitie and lea-
sing, because they promise vs ioy and do giue vs
sorow, they promise vs continuance, and dissemble
like hypocrites, and suddenly do forsake vs.

This is plainly seene in the hystorie of this man:
for he rusled not long in his iollitie and excesse: but
he suddenlie did sinke, and from a great flood came
to a low ebbe, his part was soone plaied, and like
to a game-player hee departed from the stage to
put off his vesture. For the text sheweth howe not
long after, as he parted from his father, so he depar-
ted from his fathers substance.

Psal. 37 In him is fulfilled the saying of the Psalmist, *I*
my selfe haue seene the vngodlie in great power, and
flourishing like a greene Bay tree, and I went by, and
loe he was gone: I sought him, but his place could no
where be found. The regard therefore of this so mu-
table and transitorie a condition of this present
worlde, is argument inough, if there were no other
reason, to weane our soules from the loue thereof,
to the onely loue of God.

A similitude The world doth serue vs as the hangman doth
the theefe, who as soone as hee hath mounted him
to the top of the Gibbet, he throweth him downe
violentlie, and so dispatcheth him.

A similitude. A man knoweth not his ende, but euen as a fish
is taken with the hooke, and as the bird is snared
by the net, and their destruction commeth of a sod-
daine:

daine: so sodainely wee do perish, and come to a fearefull end, euen as a dreame when a man awaketh, and euen as flowers that soone doe fade, and do loose their vertue. The spider of the drie slime that commeth from his body, weaueth a webbe with exceeding much labour, to catch a flie, and a little puffe of winde, or a huswiues broome sweepeth downe all, and all that labour perisheth: so we with dayly tormenting our bodies, and vexing our spirits, doe weaue vs nettes to intangle men, and to bring in ryches, which when wee haue obtayned, wee neede not much to boast, for we haue gotten but a flie, an Egyptian flie, that is alwaies buzzing about vs, and molesting vs; and that which is woorst of all, wee can not keepe our wealth when we haue gotten it, but a little puffe of wind going out of our bodies, we returne againe vnto our dust, and all our thoughts perish.

It is sayd of *Hannibal*, that hee knewe well inough how to get a victorie, but hee knewe not howe to keepe it. We knowe infinite deuices and fetches to attaine to riches, but wee know no way howe to keepe them long when we haue attained to them.

Death serueth vs as traitours. For he not onelie depriueth vs of our liues, but despoyleth vs of our goods. Whilest *Nabuchadnezzar* was stalking in his gallery, & vaunting himself of the brauery of his court, and statelines of his Palace, saying, *Is not this great Babell which I haue built?* suddenly his kingdome was taken from him, and was expulsed

A similitud

Dan.4

the companie and societie of men, and driuen among beasts.

Dan.5 Whilest *Baltasar* was quaffing out of his maine Bowles, and surfeiting himselfe with his sinful pleasures: immediately he descried a hand-writing vpon the wall, which was the definitiue doome of his destruction.

Luk.12 The Epicure in the Gospell, whilest hee talked to himselfe of his store of corne, which he had hoorded and heaped in his Graineryes, as a store for manie yeares, flattered himselfe in a foolish supposall of continuance to expende them, but his hope deceyued him, and hee not onelie was pronounced a foole, but the euent prooued him one, for his soule euen that night was taken from him, his treasures, and his pleasures could not abide with him.

Reuel.18 The whore of Babylon was exceeding drunken with her worldlie prosperitie: but like vnto strong drinke, it made her so giddie, as shee not onelie stumbled, but came tumbling downe therewith.

similitude Whilest many waghalters, and vngracious boies breake into an orchard, and gather much fruit, and doe lade their powches and sloppes wirh them: suddenly commeth the Gardiner and taketh away all which they had couetously lurched, and dry basteth thē, & so dismisseth thē with their iust reward. Whilest this vngracious yonker had gathered togither his riches & his portiō, there were diuers scouts and gardiners that took him napping, & wrought a

speedy

speedy wracke, and consumption of his substance.

The Israelites vexed and turmoiled their bodies in gathering of stubble, and when they came home loden with their grieuous burdens, they were lode with stripes, vntill they roared out for very anguish of heart. This tyrannous world, like another *Pharao* putteth vs to our taske, and enioyneth vs dayly to seeke to bring home the stubble of this earth, which whē we haue done, we are churlishly intreated, and despitefully punished: for we get our welth in tract of time, and lose it in a moment. *Exod.5*

Man walketh (saith Dauid) *in a vaine shadow, and disquieteth himselfe in vaine, he heapeth vp riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.* It hath been an ancient, & it is a true prouerb: *Fortuna vitrea est, quæ cum splendet frangitur.* Fortune is a brickle and weake vessell, a glasse that often when it shyneth, breaketh. If thou wilt gather vp thy wits, and wilt not be blind with thine eyes open, thou shalt find such inconstancie in the whole course of the world, as thou shalt haue smal cause to put affiance in it. It casteth down one to exalt an other, it impouerisheth one to enrich an other: and herein it is not vnlike vnto an houre-glasse, which emptieth one part to fill an other, when one is ful it is turned vp, and the other that is emptie is turned downe. *Psal.49*

A similitude.

We often see how that a glaring, and bright shining morning, breedeth a gloomie and rainie day. The Sunne shineth cleerly early in the morning, and of a sudden it is condensed and obscured with clouds and foggie ayre. This expresly shadoweth A similitude

...is world, in the which there is no certaintie or ſtay.

If we haue friends to day, wee haue none to morrowe: for times do change, and men change with the times. Chriſt, who at one time was welcomed in the way with greene bowes: at an other time was openly whipped with drie roddes. At one time to honour him, they ſtrowed the floore with garments: at another time to ſhame him, they ſtripped him of his garments. One time they crie *Hoſanna*, and doe call him bleſſed: an other time contrarie wiſe they yell and howle, ſaying: *Crucifie him, crucifie him.*

Matth.21

Mat.27

Matth.21

Mat.27

A ſimilitude

There is no wiſe man who will build vppon a ground which is not firme, where the windes that blowe, and the raine which fall may beate vpon that houſe, and the fall of it will bee great: but hee will build vpon a ſure foundation which ſhall not ſtirre for the rage of any tempeſt. Let God bee our Rocke vpon whome wee builde, and then (as *Dauid* ſayeth) *wee ſhall bee like vnto mount Sion, which cannot bee remooued, but ſtandeth faſt for euer.* Let vs not builde vppon vncertaine ryches, for they are like vnto the broken ſtaffe of Egypt, vpon which who ſo leaneth, it falleth a peeces.

Pſal.125

A ſimilitude

How tranſitorie and briefe our worldly ioyes are cannot be more plainly & euidently ſhewed, then by the baite by which the fiſh is caught, and by the ſnares by which the birde is ſuddenlie deceyued. The fiſh when hee ſeeth a Worme in the water

skudder

skudded vnto it, swalloweth it vp greedilie? But this baite is her bane; for the hooke the instrument of present death is couered with it, and her ioy woundeth her. The bird flieth hastily to kurnels of corne scattered in the way, and she is fettered with lime-twigges, or intangled with a net, which was spred in the way for her.

The wise man sayth thus: *I said of laughter, thou art madde: and of ioy, what is that thou doest? Labour thou not therefore for the meate that perisheth, but for the meate which endureth vnto euerlasting life.* And couet thou with *Moses* rather to suffer aduersitie with the people of god, then to inioy the pleasures of sinne for a season. We are born weeping, and we shall die sorrowing, and woulde we liue reioycing? Eccles. 2 Iohn. 6 Heb. 11

More sorrow then ioy doth that father taste of, who in one and the selfe same day, seeth his sonne both to be borne, and buried, and to haue no continuance. The prodigal sonne spilt his goods like water that runneth apace, it melted like wax before the heat of the fire, it was no sooner gathered, but it was scattered, what ioy then could he haue therin? when as cõfort lasted but the twinkling of an eie, but sorows endured for a lõg season. Wherfore for asmuch as this is our condition, we are soon depriued of the grace of God, our portion in this worlde lasteth not with vs: *The mirth of tabrets resteth, the noyce of them that reioice endeth, the ioy of the harp ceaseth.* Let vs vse this world as though we vsed it not, vsing worldlie substaunce as wee vse oares to A similitude Esai. 24 1. Cor. 9

a similitude rowe with, which wee vse to lay aside when wee come to land, and as staues in our hands, whilst we trauaile by the way, laying them away at our iourneyes ende.

The ninth Chapter.

Of the maner howe the prodigall sonne lauished out his portion: vnder which the damnable effectes of whordom, and riotous liuing are displaied.

THis ding thrift not only spent, but misspent his portion, he deuoured it with whores, as it is in the clause, and riotously concocted it, as it is inserted in the beginning of the history.

It had beene well with him, if hee had sustained but a temporall losse, and had not lost God as well as his gold: But running ouer the shooes, he rested not till he was ouer the eares. Beeing once impudent, he grew past grace, being fallen into *Charibdes*, hee desperately plunged himselfe into *Scylla*, the merciles gulfe of perdition and destruction.

Oh how is it to be wished and feruently prayed for, that worldlings, who go spoiled of their riches to the graue, might not goe spoiled of all vertue into hell?

Hee is taxed principallie for two grosse sinnes, Whoredom and Ryot: the very froath and forme of all sinne.

Hee liued riotously, and the story sheweth how,

euen

euen by lashing it on, vppon harlots, and knaues, and inordinate companions. And such mates, such kind of men alwaies doe cull out: For like will to like, as it is in the olde prouerbe. Such as are wantonly cockered from their cradles, and are suffered to liue lolely without awe or gouernment, as they growe in yeares, so will they grow in wantonnesse, they will be then consorted with none, but wanton companions.

In that the Story saith that he liued in ryotousnes, it is as much as if it had said, that he liued in al wickednes. For what wickednes doth ryotousnesse omit, or what mischiefe doth it not commit? It mispendeth all the giftes and graces of God in most fearful maner: there is no grace of God to be found in such, who wallowe in the mire and puddle of this sinne. Ryotousnes and Whordom y cause of all sinne.

The Doue, going out of the Arke of *Noah*, finding no place for the sole of hir foote, but vncleane carcasses, would not rest there, but returned to the Arke: so the holy spirit of God, who descended like a Doue, willing to remaine and dwell in our harts, if he findeth them polluted with this carrion, which is all abhomination, it will flie away from vs, and not abide with vs. As the nature of Doues is to delight in cleane houses: so the nature of Gods spirit is to delight in clean soules. *Genes.* 8. *Math.* 3

Aspicis vt veniant, ad candida tecta, columbæ:
Accipiet nullas sordida turris, aues. *Ouidius.*

This fire of the flesh is the fire of hell; our ryotous diet, gluttony and drunkennes, are the coales Note this saying.

that

that kindle it: the flame therof is filthines: the ashes vncleannes: the smoake infamy: the end of it a torment to the soule, a destruction to the bodie, a shortning of our life, the corruption of good manners, and an absolute transgression of the whole law of God. Let one fire therefore put out another: for the greater fire doth ouercome the lesser. Ouercome this lesser fire which burneth in thy bodie, by setting before thine eies the greater fire of hell, which vtterlie shall burne thy body and thy soule. Hee that keepeth not himselfe from this fire in earth: shall bee sure to burne in the other fire in Hell, for the Apostle hath flatlie concluded it, *That they that doe such things shall not inherit the kingdome of God.*

The grieuousnesse of this sinne may be iudged of sufficiently by the grieuousnes of the punishment which God at al times hath inflicted vpon it Hereupon saith saint *Augustin. Quis dubitauerit hoc esse sceleratius commissum, quod est grauius vindicatũ.* Who doth doubt, that that is hainously committed which is of the Lord so seuerely punished.

The grieuous punishnent of vhoredom. *Aug. lib. 2. ont. Donatist.*

For Ryot and Whoredome, the Lord ouerwhelmed the first world with water: and Sodome and Gomorrha, and the cities round about, he burnt vp with fire: He did smite *Onah* with suddaine death: he wasted and destroied the city of the Sichemites, and almost vtterly extinguished and raced out the whole tribe of *Beniamin.* This brought *Ammon* vntimely to his death, *Salomon* to idolatry, *Samson* to his blindnesse, the aduersaries of *Susanna* to

en 7
en. 19
n. 38
n 34
dg. 20.
am. 13
kin. 11.
g. 16.
n. 13

their

their iust destruction, and *Dauid* Gods seruaunt vnto manifolde afflictions. This caused a miserable massacre among the Israelites, for by reason of this sinne, three and twenty thousande soules were murdered without mercie, and did fall in one day. 2. Sam. 12 Num. 25

Nay further, what may we thinke of this sinne which hath beene thus punished, when as diuerse others verie grieuous sinnes, haue escaped vnpunished?

Howe manie sinnes vngraciously committed in Christes sacred societie, by his domesticall disciples did hee mercifullie remit? and doe we reade how Ryot or Whoredom hath beene tolerated in any of them?

Incredulity is a foule fault, yet *Thomas Didymus* was stained with this blot, and al the disciples were tainted with this, whome Christ doth vpbraide because of their vnbeliefe. Ioh 20 Mark. 16

Ambition, and Pride is a venemous Viper, and doth more mischiefe then any man canne deuine: Yet the two brethren *Iames* and *Iohn* swelled therewith, and the other tenne were not a little blown, and puffed vp with disdaine. Finallie at the Passeouer and last supper what a broile, and bitter brawle did breede among them about the primacie, whilest each of them did striue for preferment aboue others, and communed contentiously which should be the greatest in the kingdom of heauen? Matth. 20 Luke. 22

Malice, and sugred desire of reuenge is a maine Luke. 9

maine mischiefe: yet two of the Apostles were fiercely set vpon it, and much misled with it, when in their implacable and inexorable stomacks, they called for a iudgement against the Samaritanes, and would haue made Christ the patterne of their peeuishnes, desiring his authority to command fire from heauen to burne vp his aduersaries.

Enuy is a fretting and furious euill: yet one of Christ his houshold was diseased therewith. For *Iohn* did enuie it, and scorne it very much, that a man that was not one of their companie shoulde haue the liberty to vse Christes commission, and to practise in his name. *Maister* (saith hee to our Sa-
Luke. 9 uiour Christ) *we saw one casting out deuils in thy name, and we forbad him, because he followeth thee not with vs.*

What shall I say of couetousnesse the root of all euill, with which his houshoulde disciple *Iudas*
Ioh. 12. was mightilie bewitched? *For he was a theefe, and caried the bag.*

Last of al, apostasie and defection from the faith, and the open abiuration of a knowne truth, is a sin exceeding dangerous: yet *Peter* fell into it, and at the voice of a damsell exceedingly raued, and with bitter cursing, periurie, and banning did denie his maister.

Thus haue we laid open the nakednesse of the disciples and blowne ope their skirtes, and haue noted such defectes which the scriptures giue vnto them, which are odious and horrible: yet find we none branded with this note of ryotousnesse, or

dodded

dodded in the face with the black coale of vnclean nesse. For no vncleane thing shall enter (saith saint *Iohn*) into the kingdom of heauen. *Reuel.* 21

The nature of this sinne differeth from al sinnes: for other sinnes only do fight against the soule, but this sinne fighteth against the whole man, the body and the soule, it admitteth no boies play, to bar any part. The difference of whordom from other sinnes.

Such as are giuen and deuoted to this sinne, are brutish and beastlie, they are like as *Dauid* sayth, *to the Horse and Mule without vnderstanding.* *Psal.* 30

Shut thine eyes therefore from beholding this vanitye: it is vnlawfull for thee to see, that which is vnlawfull for thee to desire. Death entreth (saieth *Hieremy*) by the windowes of thine eies, the eyes do shoot the arrow that doth wound thy hart. *Hier* 9

Withstande thou therefore this temptation and auoide it: let it not scale the walles, and fortresse of thy heart: for then will it raigne in thy mortall body. Extinguish and put out this fire of concupiscence with a fountaine of teares. There are fewe, who are not in youth or in age inticed to this sinne. Be aduised therefore by the wisdome of *Salomon*, who prescribeth this counsaile in elegant wise. *Say vnto wisdome, thou art my sister, and call vnderstanding thy kinswoman: that they may keepe thee from the strange woman, euen from the stranger that is smooth in hir wordes. Let not thine hart decline to her pathes, wander thou not in hir wayes. For she hath caused many to fall downe wounded,* *Prou.* 7 *Verse.* 25.

and

& the strong men are al slaine by hir: hir house is the way vnto the graue, which goeth downe to the chambers of death.

We are not to wraſtle againſt this ſinne, but to auoide it.

Now this temptation muſt bee ſubdued, by eſchewing and auoiding it. Other ſinnes are vanquiſhed, as it were with force of armes by fighting againſt them: but there is no wreſtling, and ſtriuing againſt this enemie, but wee muſt turne our backes, and runne away from him. Come not neere pitch leaſt thou bee defiled with it: this ſinne will defile thee, if thou commeſt anie thing neere it. It is no credite for thee, neither is it meet to wraſtle and gripple in the field with him, who hath wallowed in the mire, and is all be ſmeared and dawbed with dirte, for thou canſt not chooſe but be berayed by his filth, howſoeuer otherwiſe thou ſhouldeſt caſt him to the grounde.

A ſimilitude

A ſimilitude

What king will not chuſe to goe to warre abroade againſt the face of the enemy, when he knoweth he hath falſe harted ſubiects at home? wee nouriſh ſinnes as traytors in our owne boſomes, and wee carrie them about vs. The skirmiſh therefore and conflict will bee daungerous if wee fight at home, let vs therefore goe abroade from our inwarde affections, and then the victorie and conqueſt may bee ours.

Iudg. 4

Truſt thou not in any caſe the wife of *Heber*, for ſhee wil beguile thee: ſhee will offer thee creame out of a Lordly diſh: but like a tyrant, with a hammer ſhee will naile thee to the ground. Thou haſt many flatterers attending vpon thee, who like *Achab*

Achabs courtiers wil daungerously deceiue thee. If thou doest trust vnto such false prophets, thou shalt with the Prophet sent to *Ieroboam* be eaten of a lyon, and be deuoured whilest there is none to helpe thee. Run away therfore with a swift foot from this sin, which is like a Crocodile, who wil destroy thee if he seeth thee first. 1. *King.* 22 1. *King.* 13

The tenth Chapter.

The daunger that commeth by euill company, expressed by the danger that the prodigall Sonne fell into.

WHereas the spirit speaketh euidentlie, that ryotousnesse was the ruine and downfal of this man: and that his ryotousnes consisted in the vaine & bad company with whom he did conuerse; with whom and among whom he deuoured his substance, and consumed his inheritance: not onely a fit, but a necessarie exhortation from hence doth arise, to auoid such companions, by whome we may fal into the like calamitie.

Hee is an vnwise man who seeing his neighbours house on fire before his eyes, will not in due time take heede vnto his owne. Other mens daungers are faire warnings vnto vs, and do plainlie teach vs, if we will incur no such iudgementes, to preuente such occasions as vsuallie doe enforce them. A similitud

As

As the company of vilde persons did worke this mans woe: so will they bee likewise our bane and confusion, if we follow them in their counsailes.

Euil cõpany worser then thieues

They are worser then theeues; for they do but touch those things that are temporal, they rob thee but of thy purse, or at the extremity doe depriue thee of this life: but these doe bereaue thee of graces spirituall, they corrupt thy manners, and not onely with riot shorten thy mortall life, but with many prouocations and allurements vnto sinne do depriue thee vtterly of thy eternall life both in body and in soule.

More infectious then the plague.

Vngracious companions doe infect more pernitiously and contagiously then the plague. For as a little sparke kindleth a great fire; a little leauen sowreth much dowe: so set thou an vngodly man in the midst of vs, and let Sathan stande at his right hand, he will kindle a fire which will not soone be extinguished, hee wil quickly draw on copesmates and disciples after him.

If thou wouldest knowe the inclination of a man, and howe hee is disposed, marke but the company whome commonly he keepeth. Euerie creature in his kind seeketh after such mates as are like vnto themselues.

Therefore the Lacedemonians very wisely enquiring after the manners and behauiour of their children, demanded with what plaisellowes, and companions they were linked, not doubting but they wold be like vnto such, whose felowship they so fancied.

The

The regarde of this animated *Elihu* to find fault with *Iob*, for that he walked with wicked men. *Iob.34*

And this was turned to Christ his reproch, and ministred matter of much murmure to his aduersaries the Scribes and Pharasies, in that he was familiarlie in commons and companie with Publicans and sinners. *Mat.9*

Yea this tooke such impression, and deepe roote in the heart of *Simon* the Pharisie, as hee doubted of his calling, and could hardly bee perswaded to thinke that man good, who kept with companie that were so bad. *If this man were a Prophet* (saith *Simon* to himselfe) *he would surely haue known, who and what maner of woman this was, which toucheth him, for she is a sinner.* *Luk.7*

And trulie this is a dangerous elench and temptation, for it is almost as difficult to bee godly among the wicked as to swimme against a raging streame. There be fewe who liue as *Lot* did among the swinish Sodomites, yet his righteous soule was vexed with the conuersation of the wicked, and he was in such danger to bee destroied with them, as God sent his Angell to drawe him by the armes, to hale, and dragge him from this Citie from amongst thē. We cannot walke so purelie as Christ did among the impure Publicanes; and therefore his example is no protection vnto vs: vnles we had his pietie, let vs not assume vnto our selues his libertie. If thou canst be holie among vnholie people, *Non equidem inuideo, miror magis*, I enuie it not, but I maruaile the more at it, The doctor of *Genes.19.*

the Gentiles mightily magnified, and extolled the
hil.2 Philippians because in the midst of a crooked gene-
ration they walked vpright, and shined like bright
lightes, and burning torches in this worlde. The
ntic.2 Church the spouse of Christ is greatly graced and
commended by hir bridegrome in the mysticall
song of *Salomon*: because being a Lillie, it thriueth
among thornes. It is exceeding hurtful for a tender
and soft Lillie, to spring vp and prosper among
hard sharpe thornes, wicked men are verie prick-
ing thornes vnto godlie consciences, and their
vilde deedes cannot but wounde the simple to the
hart. It is hard to liue among them, and to receiue
no hurt from them.

The detriment and dāmage which naughtipacks
do vs, is so much euery way, as if we loue our soules
we must haue no doings with them.

For this cause God his precept in this case is so
peremptory in the person of his people, to vs his
people, so often giuē vnto vs, in the holy scriptures.

Gen.6 The sonnes of God in contracting themselues
with the daughters of men, so powred out sinne
as water, as the earth was so stained, and defiled
with it, as for to clense it and wash away that
filth, the Lord thought it needfull to ouerwhelme it
with his floud.

1. King.13 The true Prophet who was sent from God into
Samaria, fell in company by the way with a false
Prophet, and he was slaine for it, the Lord caused a
Lyon to deuoure him vp.

1. King.22 *Iehosaphat* King of Israell was a verie good
king:

king: yet his league and fellowship with wicked *Achab*, put him in great danger, and ieopardie of his life.

The Iewes a roiall Priesthood and peculiar people, in combining & commixing themselues with the Gentiles, learned their manners, and were corrupted with their customes: and thereby as *Esay* the Prophet vpbraideth them, *Their siluer became drosse, their wyne was mixt with water, their Princes were rebellious, and companions of thieues.* *Isai.1*

The similitude which the Prophet borroweth frō the wine, expresseth liuelie the hurtfull operation of bad men, in the societie of the good. For euen as wine mingled with water, looseth his heate: so godlie men matched with the vngodlie, loose their former zeale, and heate of Gods spirit, and doe grow keie cold, or neither hot nor cold, but vtterly vnholsome, and to be spued out. And as wine delayed, if it looseth not all his vertue, yet looseth it his orient and fresh colour: so if wee loose not our goodnesse by euill companie, yet shall wee loose thereby the good name, and opinion before conceiued of vs: for vices being drawn from sooner examples and imitated then vertues, vices like ill weeds growing vp naturally of their owne accord: we must be circumspect & take heed of such, who will hale vs on violentlie by their companies to their customes, and draw vs to their detestable, and damnable waies. *a similitude*

When as a sottish fellow, soothed himselfe greatly in his customе of conuersing with vngracious *Valerius Maxim. 7.*

companie, and saide with shame and impudencie enough, that hee rather would be in company with light women, then in fellowship with Philosophers *Pythagoras* grauely and sharpelie thus answered him, that swine take more pleasure to be dawbed with dirte, then to bee washed with pure water.

One infected and contagious sheepe will bring a miserable murreine and rotte vppon the whole flocke beside. *With the holy thou shalt be holie* (saieth holie *Dauid*) but with the frowarde man thou shalt learne frowardnesse. If thou bedi bad haue fellowship with the good, and it shal do thee good. For he is the best schoolemaster to teach thee goodnesse.

P Sal. 1

1. Sam. 10 When *Saul* was among the Prophets, hee did also prophecie, and hee became a Prophet with them.

Matth. 16 Saint *Peter* in the companie of good disciples, made a good confession: but being with the wicked in the high Priestes hall, he badlie and madly

Matth. 26 abiured this confession. He was as cold in tongue, although he was then at a fire of coales, to confesse

Mark. 14 Christ being with the wicked: as hee was hot in his hande before in presence of the godlie, to defend his master.

Take thou liking of godly men, and make much of them, and delight thou in their companie, and proue whether god wil not giue it a blessing. other naughty men haue fared well for the good sake: hope thou of the like, and I nothing doubt but

that thou shalt find the like.

Consider howe *Laban* his estate was bettered, and how he thriued in the world, whilest he gaue entertainement to *Iacob* in his house, and had him at his boorde. Did not *Laban* see it? and did not *Iacob* plainelie laie it downe vnto him, and shewe him wherein, saying thus vnto him: *The little that thou haddest before I came is increased into a multitude, and the Lorde hath blessed thee by my comming?* Gen.30

There was corne enough in Egypt: *Pharao* and his nobles had enough, when a horrible famin vexed all the countries that were round about: And this God did for good *Ioseph* his sake, that did dwel among them. Gen.39

The Lord for good king *Iehosaphat* his sake, sente a gracious raine by his seruaunt *Elisha* vpon the armies aliantes, and hoastes of wicked people. 2 King.3

Didymus that was doubtfull in his absence from his good company, in the presence of his fellowes, was afterwards very faithfull. Iohn.20

On the daie of Penticost, when good men were assembled, and were all with one accorde in one place, behold God his good spirit came vpon them all, and filled the house and their heartes with comfort. Thy heart and soule deere Christian, shal receiue great heauenly comfort, by thy company which thou keepest with heauenlie men. Wherfore be as careful to make as good choise of thy company with whome thou wilt liue, as thou Actes.2

vſeſt to doe of the countrie, and grounde where
A ſimilitude thou doeſt liue. If the children of this wiſe be
ſo wiſe in their generation, as they woulde fin
their worldlie houſes, and ſeate themſelues in th
wholſommeſt ayre, and in the fruitfulleſt ſoyl
ſo neare as they canne: bee wee as wiſe for t
prouide for our ſoules; the caſe ſtanding vs th
more vppon, by howe much the ſoule is bett
then the bodie, and the life to come is to be pre
ferred aboue this which is preſent, and let vs ſe
our ſelues among wholeſome companie, and god
lie people.

A ſimilitude If for thy bodily health thou eſcheweſt ſuc
places as are infected with the plague: for th
health of thy ſoule depart from ſuch houſes, as ar
infected and plagued with the plague of ſinne th
greateſt plague of al. Say thou therfore with godl
Dauid. *I wil keepe no companie with vaine perſon*
Pſal. 101 *and wil haue no fellowſhip with the vngodly: ſuch a*
tell lies ſhall not tarrie in my houſe, and a vild per
ſon ſhall not abide in my ſight.

The eleuenth Chapter.

Of the Dearth and wante, which the Prodigal
ſonne endured when hee went from his Fathe
into a far countrey: wherin we are taught wha
hurt we do our ſelues by departing from God, t
embrace this preſent world,

IT is a most feareful and horrible thing, to depart from the liuing God. For as in his presence is the fulnes of ioie, and as at his right hand there is abundance of pleasures for euermore: so where he is not, there can bee no comfort, but the earth is full of darkenes and cruell habitation, destruction and calamity is in our waies, and al the foundatiõs of the earth are out of course.

Take heede therefore as the Apostle exhorteth you, that there be not in any of you an euill heart, to depart from the liuing G G D. For one day in his courts is bettet then a thousand with the vngodlie: It is better to be a doore keeper in the house of our God, then to dwell in the tents of the vngodly: for saluation belongeth vnto the Lord, and his blessing is vpon his people.

If we flee as *Ionas*, from the God of mercie, wee shal light as *Ionas*, vpon the God of iudgement. As the further a man goeth from the East, thereby the neerer he commeth to the West: so the further we run from his goodnesse, the neerer thereby wee run into his vengeance. *Ionas.* 1

A similitude

The prodigall sonne, that was wanton and lusty before thorough superfluity, is now as much humbled and pinched with penurie. Hee came from Gods blessing (as the plaine saying is) into the warme sunne: hee made a wise change when from all felicitie, hee did cast downe himselfe into all extremitie, and not onely lauished out his goods vnthriftily, but fel into al beggery & necessi-

tie most miserable: and who so fond to pitie him, for hee reaped worthilie the fruit his follie sowed, and did eate the labour of his owne handes. *Qui cecidit a verbo dei esuriit, quia non in solo pane viuit homo, sed in omni verbo dei. Qui recedit a fonte sitit: qui recedit a thesauro eget: qui recedit a sapientia hebetatur: qui recedit a virtute dissoluitur. merito ergo iste egere cœpit qui thesauros sapientiæ & scientiæ dei dereliquit.* He that fel frō Gods word grew hungry; because a man liueth not by breade only, but by euery word of God. He that forsaketh the fountaine must thirst: he that departeth from a treasure must want; he that declineth from wisdom must be foolish: he ẏ leaueth vertue must come to confusion. Therfore he worthily suffered this want, because hee despised the treasures of the wisdome and knowledge of God.

Ambros. in Luc, 15

I appeale vnto the iudgement of any that is reasonable, whether he doth not worthily perish with thirst, who when as a cleere riuer runneth by his doore, not only refuseth to draw water from thence to slacke his desire: but wilfullie runneth amaine from thence as far as his legs are able to carrie him? This young man enioyed a liuelie spring of all ioie celestiall, from whence he might haue drawn with libertie enough the water of saluation: but forasmuch as wilfullie and obstinatelie hee refused it, hee iustlie did fall into this dreadfull condemnation.

similitude

The scope therfore that we driue at, and the vse that we make of this present example is this: that

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to enioy God is to liue in all plentie, and to depart from him is to fall into all pouertie. in al plenty: & to depart from him, is to fall into all pouertie.

There is no countrey village, bee it neuer so meane, and in so great pouertie, but if the king and prince of the people repaireth thither, and keepeth Court there, during that time it aboundeth with all things, in all respects necessarie: but assoone as the Court breaketh vp againe, and the king remooueth to another place, it becommeth soone as beggerlie as it was before: so let any of vs bee neuer so poore and base, yet so long as God our heauenlie king shal keep his court in the village of our soules, we shall be satisfied with the plenteousnes of all things, and wee shall abundantly drinke of his pleasures, as out of a ruer: but when hee remooueth againe from vs (as he doth when we remooue from him and seeke strange countries, and commit strange sinnes) then are our soules like the drought in Summer, wee are poore and in all miserie, wee become the ofscumme and excrements of the people. A similitude

When the Sunne which quickeneth and renueth all things, doth depart from any Countrey, the earth foorthwith becommeth colde and barren, therefore the Winter when the Sunne is most from vs, is the deadest time and season of the yeare: so when God the Sunne of righteousnesse, who by the beames of his grace refresheth vs all, and quickeneth vs anewe, being before deade vnto sinne, departeth from our soules, our hearts growe colde, and wee are altogither dead vnto euerie

good worke.

As long as our feete ſtand in thy gates, O Hieruſalem, we are well inough. For who ſo dwelleth vnder the defence of the moſt high, ſhall abide vnder the ſhadowe of the Almightie. But herein is preſent daunger to depart from him, and forſake his commaundements.

ſimilitude. The young Chickens ſo long as they are vnder the Henne, and are couered with her winges, are out of ieopardie: but if they ſtraggle and wander abroade, they are ſnatched vppe by the Vulture, and rauenous Kite: ſo wee are ſure vnder God his protection, for hee ſhall defend vs vnder his winges, and wee ſhall bee ſafe vnder his feathers: his faithfulneſſe and truth ſhall bee our ſhield and buckler: but if we flitch from him, and take our vagaries after our owne deſires, wee ſhall fall forthwith into the pawe of the Lion, and the mouth of the Bear, and expoſe our ſelues as a pray vnto the diuell.

ſimilitude If a mans ſonne ſickeneth in his fathers houſe, or bee in anie want, the father eaſilie recouereth his health, and ſupplieth his neceſsities: but if he ſickeneth, or falleth into neede in a farre Countrey farre diſtant from his father, his father by no meanes can reſtore or benefite him. If thou beeſt neuer ſo ſicke in ſoule, or otherwiſe diſtreſſed, if thou beeſt in Gods houſe, and a member of his Church, hee will giue thee medicine to heale thy ſickeneſſe, and he will deliuer thee out of al thy troubles. but if thou cutteſt off thy ſelfe from

the

the societie of his house, and fellowshippe of his saintes, and rangest farre after the carnall lustes of the flesh, and of the minde, there is no health or saluation for thee: thou must first returne from whence thou piddest depart, else thou canst not in anie wise be cured.

If God bee thy shepheard thou canst want nothing: for *Dauid* setteth downe that for a flat conclusion. *Psal.22*

But what Prince or Potentate, or sonne of man can say so of himselfe, that hee is in that case that hee wants nothing? The harlot in the Reuelation presumed so much, and made her proude bragges, that shee was rich and wanted nothing, but shee lyed lewdlie, not knowing that shee was naked, poore, and miserable. *Reuel.3* Onelie Christ his poore and tender sheepe may truly say, so much. For hee hath brought vs into greene pastures, hee hath ledde vs to the waters of comfort, he will conduct vs to the pathes of righteousnesse for his names sake.

Albeit we haue riches at our desire in this world, and leaue the rest of our substaunce to our babes, yet is that ryches without Gods good grace (the onelie true ryches) verie searefull pouertie. *Wee shall hunger like dogges, and go about the Citie. Wee shall eate and not be filled, we shall drinke and not bee satisfied: wee shall bee couered with clothes, and shall not be warmed,* sayth the Prophet *Aggee*. *Psa.58* *Agge.1* *Ionas* was greatlie ioyfull of his Iuie bush, but this comforte continued not because God frowned on him. For God sent a worme, which in *Ionas.3*

one

one night did eate it vp, and this his ſhelter was taken from him, and his heade immediatlie with the heate of the ſunne aked, and his heart through exceeding griefe panted. A worme ſhall gnawe and conſume our worldly wealth, and then like *Ionas* our bodies and ſoules ſhal be vexed and ſore troubled, and wee ſhall roare for anguiſh and vexation of ſpirit.

ſimilitude

Wee cannot moderate and quench our thirſt by putting ſalt into our mouthes: or extinguiſh fire by putting Oyle into it: it is onelie God who ſatisfieth vs, worldlie riches are like ſalt making vs more thirſtie, and greedier of more. The couetous alwayes want not onelie that hee hath not, but that alſo which he hath, for hee keepeth it by him, and dare not vſe it, no not when neede requireth it, hee is neuer ſufficed: *Sed creſcit amor nummi, quantum ipſa pecunia creſcit*: but couetouſneſſe encreaſeth with his money, he is euer in neceſſitie.

Wherfore if thou thirſteſt, come vnto me (ſayth Chriſt) and I will refreſh thee. *If* thou doſt hunger open thy mouth wide (ſaieth God) and I will fill it. Delight thou in the Lorde, and hee will giue thee thy hearts deſire. It is a prepoſterous and madde courſe, to feede anie creature with a contrarie diet, diſagreeing with his nature: feede a horſe with hay, and not with fleſh: a Lion with fleſh and not with graſſe: mans bodie with breade and not with poyſon: mans ſoule with God, and not with the world. The prodigall ſonne not feeding

p.7

f.79

f.35

ding on this foode pined with hunger: not taſting of this ſweetnes, taſted of bitternes: not hauing this riches ſell to all neceſſitie.

Cain when hee departed from Gods preſence, was a branded runnagate vpon the face of the earth. *Gen.4*

Agar when ſhee departed from *Abrahams* houſe, what found ſhee abroad but pouertie and affliction? *Gen.16.*

There was a fierce famine in the land of Egypt where *Ioſeph* was not: ſo muſt there needes bee a horrible want there, where our God is not.

The Lions hunger, and ſuffer thirſt (ſaith the prophet *Dauid*) *but they who put their truſt in the Lord ſhall want no manner of thing that is good.* A cruell people like vnto Lions ſhall ſterue and periſh: but God his deare ſeruants in the time of ſcarcitie, ſhall haue inough. *Pſal.32*

Doeſt thou deſire riches? *Riches and plentcouſneſſe are in his houſe.* Deſireſt thou beautie? *He is fairer then the ſonnes of men. Thou art fairer my Loue.* Deſireſt thou life? *I am the life* (ſayeth the Lord) *and whoſoeuer beleeueth in me, yea though he were dead, yet ſhall he liue.* Deſireſt thou ſaluation? *He ſhall ſaue his people from their ſinnes.* To conclude, they ſhall want nothing that lead a godlie life, for the Lord is their portion and their ioynter, he ſhall maintain their lot: their lot is fallen into a faire ground, yea they haue a goodlie inheritance: for hee ſhall giue them their hearts deſire, and ſhal not denie them the requeſt of their lippes; He ſhall *Pſal.112* *Cant.4.* *Iohn.14.* *Matt.1*

feede

Psa.20 Psal.103 Luke 1

feede their mouthes with good things, making them strong and lustie like an Eagle, he filleth the hungrie with good things, and the proude hee sendeth emptie away.

Wherefore seeke the Lord, and your soules shal liue, for they that seeke after strange gods, shall finde much trouble: let not him therefore bee the least of our desire, who giueth to euerie one what he can desire.

The xii. Chapter.

Of the miserable slauerie of the prodigall sonne: wherein the slauerie of sinne is manifested.

THE Prophet *Esay* flowting the fondnes of worldly men, who doe waste their wits, and imploy their whole endeuors, and euen consume themselues to attaine so worldly vanitie, saith: *They weaue the spiders web.* The Spider laboureth much to verie little purpose, for her wearisome webs are wouen onelie to insnare, and intangle a flie: what is the issue of our pensiue cares of gathering worldlie goods, but miserable seruitude & slauerie of soule? They are got with care, kept with feare, and lost heauinesse. They know not what they doe, but they woorke without witte like the builders of Babel.

Esay 59

11

Glaucus is canonized for a famous foole by common consent, for coaping his golden and embro-

dered

dered harneſſe, for braſen and pelting armour.

Reuben and *Gad*, and halfe *Manaſſeh* were groſſelie beſotted doting vppon Gilead becauſe it was good meddowe grounde, verie fit for Paſture, preferring a plotte of paltrie Paſture for their Cattell before the mellifluous and pleaſant lande of Canaan, which flowed with milke and honie. Num. 32

The children of *Iſrael* were like ſimple children, who had rather toyle like drudges in the lande of Egypt, vnder a cruell tyrant, then to liue at libertie in the lande of Promiſe vnder a gentle father. Num. 21

The Gergeſines who preferred their ſwine before Chriſt, what were they elſe but ſwiniſh and ſenſuall? Matt. 8

Aeneas when famous Troy was vanquiſhed, being permitted with the reſt of the Citizens, to cary away with him anie one thing which he moſt of all eſteemed, did chooſe and take away the gods of his Countrie, teaching vs by his choiſe, that God to him was better then his goods; that God was to be preferred aboue the beſt. Wherfore what a lewd and loſt child was this, who preferred the moſte vilde and accurſed creature, before his onelie and moſt bleſſed Creator? Who had rather conuerſe contrarie to nature with this farmers ſwine, then to bee in companie with his fathers ſeruants: that preferreth emptie husks a ſwiniſh fodder which his maiſter dooth denie him,

before

before the Nectar and Ambrosia of his God, which his heauenly father offereth him?

The Israelites preferred their grosser diet, their Onions, their Garlicke, their flesh pottes of Egypt, before Angels foode, the celestiall Manna which God rained downe among them.

Luk. 14 The guests that were inuited to the great Supper, did choose rather to follow their priuate businesse, which they thought more profitable.

Both these sorts of people are to be condemned: yet were they more reasonable by much then this man: for these men had their pleasure, and profite to miscarie them: but this mans action had neyther of them both. For what pleasure or profite did succeede his enterprise, the hystorie nowe sheweth vs.

First of all casting off the sweet yoake of Christ, and his easie burthen, in all seruile obsequie he enthralleth himselfe vnto the intollerable thraldome of the diuell, who forthwith most cruellie and despitefullie entreateth him, baselie and abiectlie reputing of him, transporting and binding him to his beggerly farme, to feede filthie swine, where loades of afflictions were layde vpon his shoulders, and were as great burthens too heauie for him to beare.

What contagious and abhominable sauours was hee constrained to sucke vp? what irkesome scritchings, clamours, and gruntings, was he enforced to indure? Last of all, what a fearefull famine did torment him, when as he would haue crammed himselfe

himselfe with huskes, a foode rather burdensome then nourishable to his bodie: Here was a strange and admirable alteration. His nostrels which before were continuallie delighted with incense and perfume, with the redolent and fragrant odours of his fathers court, were now choaked vp, smothered and poysoned with all most ranke and detestable smels, fuming vp into them in his maisters farme. His eares & sences which before were tickled with the Shackbut, Dulcimer, and all instruments of Musicke, were nowe so grated with all swinish discorde, as hee could not heare a more odious and hatefull noyce. His foode which before was of the finest flower, was now of the courcest and grossest graine. Finallie, degenerating from a man into a beast, hee was worthilie dieted, and fedde among beastes.

O consider this ye that forget God, what punishments and afflictions hee hath prouided for you. If ye rebell with this man, yee shall bee plagued with this man. If ye depart with him from God, ye shall fall with him immediatelie into the thraldome of the Diuell: *Knowe ye not* (sayeth the Apostle of the Gentiles) *that to whome yee haue giuen your selues, as seruauntes to obey, yee are made his seruaunts whome yee doe obey*? Euerie sinner vppon his departure from God, foorthwith falleth into the handes of the Diuell. For a sinner is the captiue and bondslaue of the Diuell, hee hath taken him in the warres, and hee is his prisoner.

Assoone as a sinner departeth frō God, he falleth into the hands of the Diuell. *Rom. 6.*

A similitude

As a ship without a Pilot saileth not whither she should, but whither the windes and tempests driue her: so a man destitute of the grace of God, and forsaken of God doth not that he should, but that which the diuell draweth him vnto.

A similitude.

Sinne is like vnto strong wine, which soone ouercommeth vs, and casteth vs down headlong into the temptations of the diuell. And when we are once in his clawes and subiection, what misery and calamitie doth he lay vpon vs? He tieth vs vp to the racke and manger, he hath a faire farme for vs, his swine are our felow seruants, or rather our quarter maisters, whom we must attend vpon, and be glad of their reuersions.

The miserie of a sinner fallen from God into hands of the diuell.

When *Nebuchadnezzar* had taken the king of Iudah prisoner, hee handled him most miserably: he boared out his eyes, hee murdered his children, hee bound him in chaines, and carried him to Babylon: when the diuell taketh anie sinner prisoner, he dealeth so with him: he putteth out the eies of the inwarde man, that hee may not see his sinne, hee keepeth him fast bound with the manacles of sin, that he cannot depart from him, and last of all, hee carrieth him with him into Babylon the place of confusion.

2. *King.* 25

A liuely example like vnto this may *Samson* bee vnto vs, whom the pretended loue of *Dalila* beguiled so much, as he fel into his enemies the Philistins hands, who plucked out his eies, bound him to a post, handled him like a slaue, putting him to a sore and tyrannous taske to grind in the mill.

Iudg. 16

The like case almost was the case of the Israelites, who seruing vnder Pharao that sound citizen, he tired and almost spent them with successiue extremities, putting their shoulders to the burdens, and their hands to the making of the pottes, their whole bodyes to hard labour in the myre, and in the clay. *Exod.15*

Iacob his estate was but a little better vnder his vnnaturall vncle *Laban*: hee toyled out of measure in his harde seruice vnder him both night and day, and he chaunged his wages ten seuerall times togither. *Gen.31*

This is the condition of all such who serue the diuell, or embrace this present world: they neuer haue any rest: the bread of affliction, and water of trouble is the portion of their cup. Wee may take vp the complaint of *Iob* in this case, and say: *He will not suffer mee to take my breath, but filleth me with bitternesse*. It is sayde in the Reuelation, that those who adored and worshipped the beast found no rest: so wee are sure wee shall neuer haue rest, so long as we serue the diuell, and our beastlie affections. *Reuel.14*

They that serue the diuell, and the world, neuer haue anie rest. *Iob.9*

All things turne to sorrow to him that is a sinner. If hee bee in prosperitie, hee feareth he may loose it: if in aduersitie, hee despayreth to ouercome it. Hee sleepeth of both sides in the middest of the sea. If he receiueth an iniurie, good God with what importunitie doth hee follow it? Hee repayreth home, tumbleth vpon his bedde, hee turneth his face to the wall with *Achab*, and pyning in

All things turne to sorrowe to a sinner.

his minde he pineth his bodie, refuseth his meate, sendeth for his friends, gathereth al his power speedily to reuenge it. And this argument might be exaggerated by diuers other circumstances, but it is a matter needlesse, in a case so manifest, beeing as cleare as the Sunne.

If al were now aliue which haue euer died since the beginning of the creation, and they were asked this question, whether that in this life they so liued in pleasure, as they tasted not of sorrow, or enioyed prosperitie without following aduersitie? I am sure that they woulde not, or coulde not affirme it. The slauerie of sin is so grieuous and importable, as God by the mouth of his Prophet *Hieremie* saith of it, *Ye shal serue other Gods, which shal not let you rest day nor night.*

Iere. 6

A similitude *Gen. 13*

Hee that serues the Diuell, is like the wheele of a clocke which neuer standeth still. The world mooueth discorde betweene *Abrahams* and *Lots* heardsmen, and will not by anie meanes let them dwell togither.

Gal. 4.

The worlde is like to *Agar*, or mount Sinai in *Arabia*, which gendreth vnto bondage: if we will be free, let vs looke vp to Hierusalem aboue, which is the mother of vs all. This is confirmed by the suffrages, and testimonies of the liuing, and of the deade.

Eccle. 2.8

Salomon liuing enioyed all the pleasures which the world could yeeld him. *I did build houses* (saith he) *I did plant Vineyards, I made gardens and orchards*; and hee leadeth vs along with a large dis-

course

course of his seuerall doings, but this is the Epitaph hee writeth vpon them all: *All is vexation and anguish of spirit.*

The testimonie of the dead is recorded and set downe in the booke of Wisdome, where the damned ghosts in hell doe crie and howle, saying: *Wee haue wearied our selues in the way of iniquitie, we haue walked hard wayes, and we haue not knowne the way of the Lord.* *Wis. 5*

Let vs therefore loath that which is so bitter and vnholsome to vs, otherwise it will tend to our great danger.

That sicke man is in no small perill, whose stomack can brooke nothing but vnholsome meat: so will it bee no lesse daungerous to the soule, if thou canst sauour nothing but thy vnholsome sinnes. *A similitude*

Thou mayest not in this worlde without forfaiture of them, carrie into straunge Countryes thy corne, thy wine, thy wares forbidden by the lawes of the lande, thy sinfull worldly wealth, and temporall pleasures are wares forbidden, thou mayest not carrie them with thee vnto heauen. Let not the dung of this worlde therefore put out thine eyes, as the dung of the Swallow did put out *Tobias* his eyes, that thou mightest not see the slauerie which thy sinne leadeth thee into. For the remembrance of it will bee grieuous vnto vs, and the burthen thereof intolerable. We that serue this citizen with the prodigall sonne, *A similitude* *Tob. 2.*

Tendimus in Latium, sedes vbi fata quietis
Nulla dabunt.

There is no quietnes or rest to be hoped for, but they daunce in a circle, they are turned round about like vnto a whele, and as a doore is rolled by the hinges: so are they rolled with perpetuall perturbations.

The xiii. Chapter.

A comparison betweene the seruice of God and the seruice of the diuell: wherein is shewed how easie Gods seruice is, and how hard the other is, vnder the hardnes of the prodigall sonne his seruice, who could not obtaine the offall and reuersion of the swines husks.

IT was the hardest seruice euery kind of way that this man did endure. His labour was as great as his wages small; his thraldome most exceeding, but his reliefe most slender: as in drudgerie exceeding all, so in hunger oppressed aboue all. He was round about griped and gailed with grief, wearied and wasted with al woful bondage. He was fiercelie assaulted by two hellish fiends, most extreame tormentors of his distressed soule, labour, and famine, which so enfeebled his mind & subdued his body as he was now almost absorpt, & consumed of them, they had well nigh quite wasted him, and drawn him drie, and sucked out the blood out of his vaines, and his marrow out of his bones.

Was

Was there euer in the world such a maister heard of, who commaunded so much, and rewarded so little? who would haue all his worke done, and wil allow neither money nor meate for the dooing it? This is our estate if with this man wee will serue such a maister: and rather like rebels turne to the enemie, then durifull subiects performe obedience to our liege and souereigne.

It were well therefore that wee weighed the conditions of both our maisters, before wee leaue one, and cleaue vnto the other: that wee woulde compare the sweetnesse of Christs yoke which we so loath, with the sowrenesse of the diuels seruice which we so loue: the hardnesse of ỹ one, with the easinesse of the other: the recompence of the one, with the wages of the other.

A similitude

He that layeth siege and batterie to a towne, hath this carefull foresight, if so be he be wise, that the charge of this attempt exceedeth not the woorth and value of the towne: looke to it afore hand that thou payest not too deare for the diuels seruice: it is at a deare rate, it will cost thee the price and woorth of thy soule. Our freedome was bought with a greater price, euen the bloud of Iesus Christ: take wee heede therefore that wee giue not our selues as seruants to the Diuell. The prodigall sonne his seruice liuelie setteth foorth the nature and condition of the diuels seruice in these three poynts.

A cõparison betwen the seruice of God, & the seruice of the diuell.

First, his precepts and commands are difficult, he sendeth him to his farme, he seruilely cõstraineth

him, to attend vpon his ſwine.

2 Secondly, he grudgeth him his needful diet, and giueth him no food: he denieth him the light, and empty huskes the reuerſion of his hogs.

3 Thirdlie, hee payeth him no kind of wages, as a recompence of his ſeruice to helpe himſelfe with all. This is the practiſe and manner of the Deuill, as Chriſt his cuſtome and propertie is quite contrarie.

1 The eaſines of Chriſtes commandements. Howe hard and extreame his commandements are, largely hath beene ſhewed in the former chapter: let vs rather therefore ſhewe the eaſineſſe and lightneſſe of Chriſt his preceptes, for his burden is no burden, but it is a burden not to beare his burden.

A ſimilitude If Chriſt his burden be anie thing heauie it is the heauines of our ſinnes which cauſeth it. A burden of feathers of it ſelfe is light, but it is made heauie with putting lead vnto it: ſin which hangeth vpon vs heauier then leade, maketh Gods commaundements too grieuous vnto vs.

A ſimilitude The birde is not burdened by the burden of hir feathers, but ſhee flieth much more the lighter by them, then if ſhe were without thē: Chriſt his yoke and burden make not men to ſtoupe, to be dull and heauy, but iocund and pleaſant, and to bee pliable to euery good worke.

A ſimilitude If a king ſhoulde giue commaundement to his huntſman to hunt, were it a hard commandement; if therewithall he ſhould furniſh him with al things neceſſarie, as houndes, horſes, and ſuch like, or were

or were it not rather a verie easie charge? so is it with vs: for where as Christ laieth his commandements vpon vs, he assisteth vs with needfull graces thereunto, so as wee may say with the blessed Apostle. *Wee are able to doe all things in him that strengtheneth vs.*

Gods lawes are light and comfortable vnto vs in a double respect. First for the magnificence of the reward. Secondlie, for the assistance of his holie grace. *Indixit opus & promisit mercedem.* As hee enioyneth vs our taske, so hee paieth vs our wages. *Si labor est, attende præmium magnum: si non est, gratis accipis præmium.* If it be a labor, consider thy reward: if not, thou hast thy rewarde for nothing.

Gods lawe light in a double respect. *August.*

Were the seruice of God neuer so laborsome, yet I suppose, that it is not worth the exceeding waighte of glorie, which shall bee laide vpon vs, whilest we looke not vpon the things that are seen, but the thinges that are not seene: for the thinges that are seene are mortal, but the things that are not seene are eternal.

Christ will giue vnto thee, for the keeping of his commandements eternall life, in respect whereof all other things are of no account. We shoulde bee most willing to endure any thing for that: *Iacob* serued *Laban* seuen yeeres for the loue of *Rachel*, and they seemed vnto him but a few daies, because he so loued her, the reward made his labor seeme no labour vnto him. So for the reward that is laide before thee, endure any crosse, sustain anie shame, for

Gen. 29

for the reward will counteruaile the charge, and aboundantly requite thee in the latter end.

Moreouer he will ſtrengthen vs with his good ſpirit, wherby whatſoeuer in it ſelfe is hard ſhall be eaſie vnto vs. Therfore doth he cal his commandemẽts a yoak, becauſe a yoak is born by two beaſts, and the one doth helpe and eaſe the other. The leſſer oxe beareth the heauier part of the yoak: Chriſt the moſt lowly & humble in ſpirit, hath taken vpõ him ỹ greateſt burden ỹ thou maiſt haue ỹ lighter.

imilitude A coach or horſelitter, which is heauy of it ſelfe, is eaſily borne and caried with two horſes: ſo is Gods law howſoeuer in his owne nature it ſeemeth comberſome, very light and eaſie, if Chriſt ioyneth with vs, and draweth this chariot, if hee doth aid vs and ſupport vs with his ſpirit.

imilitude Againe if Chriſt his commandements ſeem hard: it is becauſe thou doeſt prepoſterouſlie peruert them, and doeſt contrarie vnto them. There is no lawe ſeemeth rigorous but that which maketh againſt our affections.

If thou putteſt on a garment, with the rough outſide nexte vnto thy skin, and the inward ſoft linnen outward, it is no meruaile if it be grieuous vnto thee and ỹ canſt not go with it: but put it on right, and weare it as thou ſhouldeſt, and thou ſhalt not complaine of it. Iudge of Gods lawes and commandements aright, and meaſure them not by thy carnall affections, and thou ſhalt not miſlike with them.

Wheras God doth charge the rich of this worlde

with

with their liberall almes to relieue the poore, the poorer sort like well of this commandement, and approoue it as good when as they would gainesay it, and mislike it as much if they themselues were rich, as experience proueth. If thou doest an iniurie or wrong vnto any man, immediatlie thou desirest it might be forgiuen thee: but if another doth offer it vnto thee, the like motion that is made to thee seemeth vnreasonable. It is harde to thee which thou supposest to bee easie in an other, because thy nature and affections doe withstand it. *Amor meus pondus meum, amore feror quocunque feror.* My lust is my loade, whither soeuer I am led by affections I am led. *Aug. de ciuit. dei, li. 11 c. 28*

Christ Iesus hath made his fathers burden easie for our shoulders. *For the yoake of our burden, and the staffe of our shoulders, and the rod of our oppressor hath he broken, as in the day of Midian.* *Isai. 9*

But our seruile flesh which fighteth against the spirit, our euill and sinfull lustes which resist his holy lawes, haue such preheminence and dominion ouer vs, as they wholy carrie vs to the obedience therof: in regard wherof his precepts are most paineful, his light and easie yoake is most intolerable vnto vs.

A similitud

That burden which is light to a sounde and strong man, is too heauie to him when hee is sicke and weake. *Our sinnes haue gone ouer our heades, and are as great burdens too heauie for vs to beare.* *Psa. 74*

The life and duties of a Christian man seemeth only hard to those who do not know them, and are

not

not vſed to them: Acquaint thy ſelfe with them, and meditate thereon, and let thy ſtudy, and delight be in them, and they wil ſeeme eaſie and gentle vnto thee.

A ſimilitude When a man firſt putteth on a newe doublet, it ſeemeth too ſtreight for him; but it fitteth him verie well when he hath worne it a while. Let vs put on Chriſt Ieſus our mariage garment, and let vs walke as he hath commanded vs; if this garment pincheth at the firſt aſſaie, and we cannot goe in it: vſe and cuſtome will widen it well inough, and make it eaſie for vs.

A ſimilitude Whileſt the Wood is greene, the yoake muſt needs be heauy that is made of it: but continuance of time that maketh it drie, will make it likewiſe light.

What reaſon then and wit is in our choiſe, when as we forſake the beaten and eaſie way, and follow crooked and cragged paths? when as wee prefer a cruell bondage before eaſie liberty? and had rather be a farmer to a hard tyrant, then an owner, in the houſe of a merciful father?

2 Secondlie, what oddes are in their ſeruice, herein appeare in that the one pineth vs with hunger, and the other filleth vs with the plenteouſneſſe of his houſe. Betweene the hoggiſh huskes, and heauenlie delicates there is no proportion, and yet this kind of meat, ſo mean and miſerable could not be granted him. O horrible ſlauerie and thraldom of the diuell, who draweth vs vnto his ſeruice with faire words, promiſing much, and performing nothing

thing; promising ioy but bringing pain; promising credit, but bringing shame; promising life, and leading vnto death: giuing one thing for another, as *Laban* serued *Iacob* giuing him *Leah*, when hee promised him *Rachel*. *Genes. 29.*

The worlde and the Deuill do nothing but beguile vs, the pleasures are but vaine which they do shew vs and yet they keepe them from vs, after they haue shewed them: wee cannot serue more niggish, and spitefull maisters, for they wil part with nothing.

Such a one was *Pharao*, who when as the Israelites had plodded in his claie, and tyred themselues in his slauish worke he denied them strawe, and yet woulde abate nothing of his set taske, and tale of his bricke. *Exod. 5*

Also such a terrible tyrant was *Holofernes*, who when as he laide siege to Bethulia, hee stopped vp the streames, and fountaines of water which ranne thorough the citie, whereby the distressed inhabitants of that place, pinched and oppressed with the penury of water, receiuing euery day a portion by a measure, the scarcity of it did rather torment thē, then any way comfort them, and rather inflaming then slacking their thirst. *Iudith. 7*

This is the wonted guise of the worlde and the Diuell. It presenteth to our eies a bewtiful woman, only to be with vs, and ensnare vs with her beauty, and forthwith he snatcheth her out of our sight, & suffereth vs not to haue comfort in her companie, thereby to adde more affliction vnto vs. *A similitu*

Thou

Thou canst not bee filled with the pleasures of this worlde, they doe rather famish thee, then any way feed thee. How greedy and vnsufficed is a couetous man? hee is hungry like a dog (as *Dauid* saith) and goeth about the Citty, he hath neuer his content, but complaineth still of want; hee is of all needy, the neediest man, for he wanteth not onelie that which he hath not, but also that he hath: for he hath no grace to vse it. The Poets speake of the like torment which *Tantalus* endured and sustained in hell, who was thirsty in the midst of the water that streamed by his lips, to which effect the Poet writeth thus,

Tantalus a labijs sitiens fugientia captat
Flumina, quid rides? mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.

But God contrariwise plentifullie repleniſheth our hungry bodies, and filleth our soules with goodnesse. *He filleth our mouth with good things* (as the blessed virgin in hir heauēly himn acknowledgeth) *and the eyes of all wayte vppon him, and he giueth them their meate in due season*, as *Dauid* prophecieth.

Luk. 1

Psal. 145

Open thy mouth therefore wide, and I will fill it, saith the Lorde. *Ephraim is fed with the wind*, saith the Prophet *Osea*. The thinges of this worlde are windie and swelling like the hoggish huskes, that the prodigall young man woulde haue crammed himselfe with, they onely puffe vs vp, and make vs looke big, we doe not battle, and thriue by them. They are like the charmed and enchanted meat of

Osea. 12

similitude

Nigromancers

Nigromancers, which hath only but a bare shew of meat without any taste or sauor in it.

Wherfore for this cause let vs forsake the world, and renounce the diuel, who sterueth & famisheth vs: and cleaue we only to the Lord our God, who is our portion, and inheritance for euer.

The last marke of difference between these two masters is in the wages which they giue vnto their hired seruants, the only point which seruants are to stand vpon. 3

There is no man who yeeldeth to serue anie master, but first of all hee indenteth with him for his wages: if thou wilt needes bee a seruant to the worlde, and a slaue to the Diuell, serue not for nothing, consider how thy labour and paines shal bee recompensed: which if thou doest thou shalt haue smal incouragement to appertaine to them: for their stipend and wages is death. *They doe render thee euill for good to the great disquiet of thy soule.* Rom. 6 Psal. 135

When as *Samson* was vnder the subiection of the Philistins, what reward had he of al his labors, and trauaile among them, but al despightful vsage, they boaring out his eies, and constraining him most slauishly to grind at the mill? Iudg. 16

When as the Israelites toiled out of measure, and were cleane out of heart in bringing in of stubble, this their harde sweate, and sorrow was as hardlie recompenced, for they had nothing but stripes at their wearisome returne of their cruel taskemaisters. Exod. 5

Iacob

Gen. 31 *Iacob* serued *Laban* a long time in all simplicitie and faithfulnes, & he was a most profitable seruant vnto him: yet for al that he could not haue his due, but his wages was changed ten times, and hee was very vnciuilly and churlishlie intreated. This is the Bias of the wicked worlde and the deuils fashion: do we neuer so much for them, it is either not at all, or very badly regarded.

1. Sam. 25 They serue vs right as *Nabal* serued *Dauid*, who requited his benefits, with horrible vnkindnes, like a cruell Carle, churlishlie refusing to relieue his necessitie, hauing receiued many fauours at his hands, hoggishly according to his clownish nature, and gruntingly answering the seruants of *Dauid*: *who is Dauid? and who is the sonne of Ishai? there be many seruants now a daies that breake euery man from his master, shall I then take my bread and my water, and my flesh that I haue killed for my shearers, and giue it vnto men whom I know not whence they bee?* *Nabal* by interpretation is a foole, and is a liuely figure of this present world, who in the time of neede forsaketh them all, who haue stoode them in most stead in former times.

similitude The world and the deuill are like to an vnkind Inkeeper, who maketh no account and reckoning of his guests after they are gone, yea scarce knoweth them when they come againe, although they haue often resorted to that Inne, and haue spent much money. An Inne keeper will sooner knowe thee by a wrong, then by a benefit which thou doest him. If thou strikest him with thy fist, and giuest

giuest him a blow which may sticke to his ribs, and ill intreatest him, he wil long remember thee: but spend thy thrift with him, and shew him al kindnes, and he wil soone forget thee.

Wherefore since this seruice must cost thee so much paine, and doth so little pleasure thee: I warn thee to be wiser and not to toile with the Spider, to weaue a web to entangle a flie: Or with little children all the day long to spend thy breath, in blowing vp of feathers to the ayre; or in running vp and down with a swift pace after toies, and vaine pastimes, whereby both they get many knocks, and falles, or at the fairest returne home at night tyred like dogs. A similitude

Betake thee then to such a maister, whom thou oughtest most to serue, and who wil best reward, and requite thy seruice: thou oughtest aboue all to serue the Lord, & to serue him only, for so is it written: *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, but him only shalt thou serue.* And he is a most faithfull and liberal rewarder of such as serue him, their labours shal not be in vain in the Lord: for doubtles he shal withhold nothing that is good from them that liue a godlie life, and will be his seruaunts. As hee that serues the diuell hath a double hel in this world, and the other: so they who serue God, haue a double heauen a most ioiful and most happy life, in this life, and the other.

Wherefore say we with *Dauid. Whom haue I in earth in comparison of thee? There is none that doth so great thinges for vs, thou art God alone: Thou*

art our God and we wil praise thee, thou art our king and we wil honor thee.

Therefore if thou beest not a blinde man who cannot iudge of colours: if thou wilt not wilfullie stumble with *Balaam*, thou maiest soone perceiue who is thy best maister, and make choise of him: whether the diuell, that loadeth thee with labour, starueth thee with hunger, and giueth thee no wages: or God who easeth thy shoulders of all burdens, whose yoake is easie, who filleth thee with the plenteousnesse, and pleasures of his house; and last of all who giueth thee the rewarde of thy fayth, the saluation of thy soule, vnspeakeable riches, which the eye hath not seene, the eare hath not hearde, neither canne the heart of man conceiue, which God hath laide vp in store for his seruantes.

The fourteenth Chapter.

An exhortation to auoide sinne, and to liue a godlie life, the onelie vse and purport of the premisses.

SIthens the decaie and downefall of this man happened by his sinne, as falling immediatelie by his departure from his father into the most miserable slauery of ỹ diuel: it behooueth vs that stand to take heed least we fal, and in time preuent such occasions of sin, if wee would escape the

iust

iust punishments of sinne.

The Lacedemonians, the better to moue their children to auoid drunkennes, would present vnto their viewe their drunken seruantes, that the sight of their vnseemelie, and most beastlie behauiour might breed in them a loathsom detestation of this crime. To this ende in this discourse hetherto, we haue set before your eies this mans example, and haue blown vp his skirts, that yee might see his nakednesse: that at this strange sight ye might blush within your selues, you might couer your faces with the vaile of shame, and not commit such filthinesse.

This man is the perfect patterne of a sinner, and therefore if yee list to shape out a sinner, take measure of this manne, for hee must haue his proportion. And if yee lisse to auoyde sinne, sette him before your eyes, and euerie waie auoide him.

When *Augustus Cæsar* studied with himselfe to beautifie his Empire, and to make Rome renowned, and to leaue it built with marble, being before but of brick, and acquainted one *Apollonius Thyaneus* the Philosopher, with this his princely purpose, & asked his aduise for the better dispatch of it, he replied in this wise: If your Grace be so wel minded to effect so good a worke, you must take such a course, as a skilful & expert musitian in times past, did take with his son: who sent him to schoole to an vnskilfull Musitian, charging him whatsoeuer he should see him do, to do the contrary, and

he ſhould do very wel, for his fingering, his leſſons, and his whole order was nought. In the like manner (deere chriſtian) if thou wilt beautifie, and adorne thy ſoule, the temple of Gods ſpirit, and whereas it is now but rude, and vntrim by reaſon of thy ſinne, by which it is dawbed vp with diſtempered morter, and by godlineſſe and true zeale, wouldeſt make it like the poliſhed corners of the temple, & like the gate of the temple called Beautifull: learne of this muſitian, goe to ſchoole a while with this prodigal yong man, whatſoeuer hitherto thou haſt ſeene him doe, do thou the contrarie: ſeeſt thou not howe hee departed from his father? howe he waſted out his goods? how he ſerued his enemie? doe thou the contrarie: ô cleaue vnto thy father, vſe well his good gifts, and finally abandon his enimy and thy enemy the diuell, and thou ſhalt liue for euer.

nne is in e beginng to be ppreſſed.

To do this the better thou muſt kill this ſerpent ſin in the ſhel while it is an egge, before it ſpringeth out, and become a bird: this ill weed muſt be rooted out at the firſt, when it beginneth to bud & firſt of all to appeare, before it ſprouteth forth and bee a flower, and ouerſpreadeth the ground. It muſt bee ſubdued while we are yong, leaſt it get dominion and preuaile ſo ouer vs, as we ſhal not bee able to ouerrule it in our age.

This man in his youth and tender age infected with ſin was ſo bowen therwith, as if he had not in time binſuppled with ỹ oile of Gods grace, he muſt haue burſten and dyed in his ſinne. Let our youth

therefore

youth therefore bee deuoted vnto God, and let vs from our childhood as *Anna* did *Samuel*, be consecrated vnto God.

To insinuate that our prime age belongeth vnto him, he commanded in the olde law the first borne for an oblation; and the first fruites for a sacrifice: as also to the like intent and meaning, hee ordained that the Leuites singled out to his seruice and work of ministration, should from their childehoode giue vppe themselues vnto this his holie function. *Leuit. 16*

The rod and the wand howsoeuer crooked while it is tender, is easilie made straight, but when it is growne a waste, and drie stocke, it cannot bee righted. A similitude

It is meere madnes, to shift off duties of deuotions with delaies, and to put ouer godlinesse to after times. Is not hee a fonde fellowe that saith I will not breake my horse while hee is a Colte, but when he is old, and shal sling me into the dike, and shal cast me down headlong, and shall breake my necke? so in like sorte is not he as madde that shall resolue not to subdue and keepe vnder his bodie, while it is yong, and may soone be tamed, but shal let it alone till it hath vanquished the spirit, thrown it down into the pit of perdition, and hath broken the necke of it, with the deadly fall which sinne hath giuen vnto it? It is verie good and godly counsaile, which the Poet giueth. A similitude

Principijs obsta, sero medicina paratur, *Ouidius.*
Cum mala, per longas inualuere moras.

It is good to stop an euill in the beginning, that it doe not proceed to a greater mischiefe: the medicine commeth too late when the wound and disease through sufferance and continuance is grown incurable.

A similitude

It is too late then to wash a garment, which is nowe consumed, and rotten with dirt, and filthinesse, that hath long aboade in it. Hee doth perueisie who hauing a beautifull standing cuppe of golde, and hath verie precious balme giuen vnto him to put into the cup, will not put it in, before the cup hath stoode long before full of filthie lycuor, and doth now retaine the force, and strength of the sauour of the liquour: So is he as branstcke and prepostterouslie peeuish, who when GOD hath giuen him the precious balme of his holie grace, and his cup may ouerflowe, hee will not accept of it in his young age, but will first fill his vessell full of sinne and filthinesse, till hee come to bee olde.

A similitude

It is good to withstande the enemie at the first assaulte, and not to suffer him to enter into the cittie, or to chase him out at the first entrance: it is harde to driue the strong manne out of possession, and it is too late to resist his forces, when as he hath inuaded, and gotten thy strong holds. It is too late for thee to powder thy meate, and to sprinkle it with salte, alreadie greatlie tainted, and much sauoring of corruption, and swarming with Flie blowinges. Hee that mindes to prooue an expert rider, hee will beginne betimes, and at ten

A similitude

A similitude.

yeares

yeares olde hee will bee practising, and assaying with himselfe, what he is able for to doe. Hee that intendeth a shepherds life, will endeuor with a sling to be dealing when he is a boy, he wil vse himselfe betimes to a shepheards scrip, and hee will harden himselfe afore hande, to abide the wrath, and violence of the seasons. A similitude

Thus ye see howe in worldly matters we knowe our opportunities: by these therfore let vs be taught to knowe our times for our religious duties. Our youth which is our best time is also the best for the seruice of God: let vs then in this time seeke by all meanes to subdue sinne, and to stir vp the spirit to all works of godlines.

If wee doe not this, but let our youth haue his ryotous race, this will followe of it: one sinne will hale and drawe on another, so as in shorte time with this prodigall young man, wee shall as it were be nothing else but sinne. Well saith learned Gregory. *Peccatum quod per pœnitentiam non diluitur, mox suo pondere aliud trahit.* Sinne which is not done awaie with repentance, with the waight and burden of it, draweth another after it. To the like effect, Saint *Augustine* speaketh thus. *Vnum peccatum est pœna alterius, & vnum peccatum Dominus permittit, vt aliud puniat.* One sinne is the punishment of another, and God suffereth one sinne to take vengeance of another, as it is written in Saint *Iohn* his Reuelation. *Hee that is filthie, let him be filthy still.* One sinne draweth on an other. *Greg. lib. 25 moral. cap. 12* *Aug. lib. 5 contra Iulianum.* *Reuel. 22*

When as *Cain* laboured of the sinne of Enuie

he staide not there, but his enuie brought forth mur-
Gen. 4 der, & his murder heresie, supposing he could hide his iniquitie from God: and last of all hee fell into vtter desperation, the very next doore to perdition and destruction.

In *Dauid* wee haue an example of the like. For
2. Sam. 11 first sinne brought forth lust, lust adultery, adulterie the murder of an innocent man.

The like may bee saide of *Peter*. Hee first
Mark. 14 simplie denied Christ, hee secondlie more boldelie stoode to the deniall, but thirdlie verie impudentlie hee bound it with banning and most accursed swearing.

When as *Iudas* prooued a thiefe, hee grewe a murmurer, disdaining and grudging the de-
Ioh. 12 uotion of *Marie Magdalen*, and after that a traytor, and finallie a desperate destroyer of himselfe.

This prodigall companion, when hee first became vntowarde, he neuer rested vntill he grewe past grace, and came to the extremity, and top of all inquity. This is the mischieuous operation of sinne, these be the dangerous and damnable effects thereof.

Similitude As a stone that is cast into the water, raiseth vp a bubble, and that immediatly raiseth vp another: so one sinne occasioneth another, vntill we grow obdurate and hardened in our sinne.

When *Samson* gaue consent to be bound of *Da-*
Iud. 16 *lila*, hee came so into bondes as hee coulde not come out, beeing first bounde with greene cordes

that

that were neuer dried: ſecondly, beeing bounde more ſurelie with new ropes, that were neuer occupied: but thirdlie, ſeuen locks of his heade were platted with the threeds of the woofe, and were faſtened with a pinne: but laſt of all hee was ſhauen, and depriued of his ſtrength, and deliuered vp into the hands of the Philiſtines, who did cruellie entreate him: and ſo from one miſchiefe he ran into all danger.

So euerie ſinner if he taketh not good heed, from one ſinne falleth into a thouſand: his ende is farre woorſe then his beginning. *He draweth miquitie* (as the Prophet ſayth) *with cords of vanitie: and ſin as it were with cart ropes.* He is ſtill faſter bounde in the diuels Chaines, till the iron enter into his verie ſoule, to the deſtruction of his ſoule. If a man maketh entrance into a ſinne by ſwearing, hee proceedeth with lying, and breaketh out into ſtealing, whooring, and killing, and blood toucheth blood.

Eſay. 5.

Oſea 4

And what is the cauſe hereof? Trulie onelie this, in that a ſinner hath no feeling of his ſinne. One ſinne doth more vex and torment a iuſt man, then huge heapes of ſinnes do an vngodly perſon.

A ſinner hath no feeling of ſinne.

There is no element that is heauie in his ſpheare. If a man that would ſwimme, plungeth himſelf into the bottom of a ryuer, albeit he be couered with neuer ſo much water, yet is not that water anie burthen vnto him, ſo long as he abideth and continueth in the riuer: but out of the riuer a bucket of that water laid vpon his ſhoulders, is too heauie

A ſimilitu

for

for him: for then is the Element out of his place, and by meanes therefore is burdenſon.

A ſimilitude

A ſcoppe of water whileſt it is in the Well may bee haled and dragged to and fro of a childe: but beeing eleuated aboue his element, and rayſed vp aboue the toppe of the water, it requireth the ſtrength and force of a mans arme.

A ſimilitude

He that eateth Onions, ſmelleth not the groſnes and rankes of their ſauour, but another who commeth nigh him dooth ſoone perceiue and feele it. Thou haſt ſwallowed vp O ſinner, very groſſe garlicke, leekes and onions, and in regard thereof thy breath is moſt loathſome to euery good man, who ſhunneth thy preſence, and indureth not thy company: but thou vilde wretch who haſt no noſtrels, without ſenſe & feeling, art not annoied with thē, they neuer trouble or come neare thy conſcience.

in is oppoſite vnto all ood, & the uſe of all ull.

And it is no maruel that ſinne doth this euill, becauſe it is all euill in it ſelf, as being in his nature no poſitiue thing but the priuation of all goodnes. It is flatly oppoſit to al vertue, & therfore it muſt needs bee an exceeding euill. A ſinner muſt needs be depriued of all goodnes, becauſe by ſinne he ſhutteth himſelfe from God the authour of all goodnes. As the wife of *Lot* by reaſon of her ſin, was in iuſt indgment molten into a piller of ſalt: ſo is a ſinner barren and fruitles, like vnto lande that is ſowed with ſalt, which can bring forth no fruit.

n.19

militude

As there be manie who doe riſe vp agaynſt a poore widow, and offer her much wrong, becauſe ſhee hath no husbande or friend to aſſiſt her, and

pleade

pleade her iust cause: so if we loose God (as we do by our sinne) the diuell and all creatures seeke after our soules vtterlie to destroy them, saying: *God hath forsaken him, persecute him and take him, for there is none to deliuer him.* *Psa.71* *Dauid* therefore putteth vp this his sute to god. *Be not thou far from me O Lord:* for what then will follow? *Manie oxen will come about mee, manie fat Bulles of Basan will compasse mee about on euery side.* *Psal.51*

God is willing to abide with thee, wherfore take thou heed thou constrainest him not by thy wilfull sinnes against his will to depart from thee. If thou accountest not of him as thou oughtest, and giuest him not that honour which is due vnto his name, he hath no reason to abide with thee.

If thou placest a strange woman, blacke and misshapen at the vpper end of the Table, and makest thy Ladie a peerlesse princesse to wait vpon the table, and to serue her, is not she iniuried in the highest maner, and doth she not indure the fowlest disgrace that possiblie can be, and hath she not good cause to forsake thy fellowship, & to dwel no more with thee? In the like maner sinfull man dealeth with his god, preferring his inordinate & loose lusts, the beggerly creatures and substance of the earth, before the eternall creator of all thinges, the maker of the world. For this cause God doth stomacke this peruerse peeuishnes, and cannot abide it, but thereupon immediatlie he withdraweth himselfe, and with himselfe all his blessings, and his graces from vs, and we are worthily serued. *A similitude*

As

Gen. 31. As *Iacob* when he saw that *Laban* his countenance was chaunged against him, and that hee looked sowrely, and grimlie vpon him, he resolued with himselfe to abide no longer with him, but to depart from him: so God serueth vs, if we as *Laban* looke not vpon him as we ought to do, but are of a crooked and froward disposition.

Exod. 33 This is a lamentable and heauie case, and who dooth not tremble that considereth iustlie of it? When as God made answere vnto the people of Israel that he would not ascend with such a people, so stubborne and stiffenecked, the people were driuen to their dumps vpon it, and wept verie bitterlie; and so ought we to do when God forsaketh vs, and taketh his presence and fauour from vs.

I might lead you further with a large discourse and treatise of this matter, for large is the compasse and bounds of sinne. Infinite reasons might bee vrged to enforce vs to a hatefull detestation thereof: but if there were nothing else beside, the prodigall sonne his example and punishment is a motiue of much moment to perswade the same. We might here intreate iustlie of the grieuous punishments of the life to come in hel fire to be inflicted vpon sinners: for fire and brimstone, storme and tempest, this is the portion of their cuppe. But it is inough to consider of the intollerable hell which they endure in this life, in their tormented consciences.

is most heuous in latter e. The first hellish torment, is the gnawing and consuming worme of conscience, which dismaieth the minde, and driueth it into a dreadfull despaire.

The

The ende thereof is as sowre, as the beginning was sweete.

As a man when hee drinketh dead and badde wine, the bitternesse of it he tasteth in the ende: so man drinking sinne as an Asse drinketh water, this wine ouercommeth him, and hee feeleth the hurt that it doth him in the end. Sinne sheweth vs a colour as the wine doth in the glasse, and it presenteth vnto vs a vaine shewe of delight, and it maketh vs drunken: but by and by it aggrauateth and surchargeth the heart, and so inflameth it with a fire, and hel of griefe, as it suffereth vs not to rest, or take any quietnesse. A similitude

As *Iob* in the mids of his troubles and afflictions, wãted not a swift messenger to grate his eares with sorrowes, and to bring him bad tydings: so a sinner hath peales and alarums in his eares, crying out agaynst him, rubbing his memorie with a rehearsall of such blessings and benefites which he hath lost, and such curses and iudgements which hee hath runne into by sinne. These are prickes in our sides, and thornes in our eyes, which do wound vs continuallie, and suddenlie bereaue vs of all former ioy of our sinfull pleasures. As *Ammon* assoone as hee enioyed his pleasure of his sister *Thamar*, immediatelie loathed her as much as euer hee loued her: so all vngodlie pleasure is suddenlie dashed, and is turned into sorrow. *Iob.* 1 2. Sam. 13

The second torment which sinne procureth, is shame and confusion, making vs to holde downe our heades like bulrushes, to seeke solitarie places wherein Sin excuseth and couereth it selfe.

wherein to hide our heades, our consciences pronouncing vs so guiltie of sin, as for verie shame we dare not behold the face of man. As a woman that hath a blemish in her face, shee is alwaies hiding it that she might not seeme deformed, when as shee that is beautiful vncouereth her face, & is very glad when euery one beholdeth her: so euery sinner deformed with sin, would shrowd his sinne vnder the cloake of shame, and excuse it & hide it as much as he can that it might not bee knowne and espied in him: as *Adam* did with God, and *Dauid* with *Nathan*, onely the godlie and vpright man holdeth vp his head, looketh vp to heauen, and is not ashamed.

A similitude

Gen.3
2.Sam.11

A sinner is tormented with ye feare of punishment.

The third tormētor of a wofull sinner is the fear of iudgement, which is alwaies before his eies. He cōsidereth with himselfe what he hath deserued, and he feareth to be recompenced after his deseruings. His minde runneth still vpon Gods iustice, and his owne wickednes: and thus he is dead euen whilest he liueth. The fear of death before is more torment to him then manie seuerall deathes,

A similitude

Pro.28

We may truly say that sinne is the serieant and hangman of a sinner. Assoone as a theefe espieth the serieant, or seeth his Iudge, he runneth away albeit none pursueth him: he knoweth that he is in daunger of the lawe, and dareth not aduenture to abide triall: so a sinner flieth when no man pursueth him, saith the wisedome of *Salomon*. He is afraid at the falling of a leafe, hee is cast downe with feare, and can not rise againe at the sight of God his Iudge, who is alwayes in his soule. Wee haue iust cause

therefore

therefore to be wearie in this way of wickednes, so hurtfull vnto vs as nothing can be more. *If* a cup of golde be giuen vnto vs, that is full of poison, we can make vse and profite of this gift, by powring out the poyson, and reseruing still the cuppe when the poyson is out, which is neuer a whitte the worse being washed cleane of vs: but sinne is such a spreading and pearcing poyson, as it poysoneth the vessell, euen the soule and the bodie wherin it is kept, and it cannot bee purged but by the hand of God, and by the water of our Repentance. A similitude

The Viper and adder cannot bee killed with their owne poyson; but a sinner may be killed with his owne poyson, euen the poyson of his sinne. Let vs then speedily returne from sinne, so deadly venemous and poysonable vnto vs. A similitude

We haue all departed with this prodigall sonne from the obedience of our father: we haue too lasciuiously, riotously and wickedlie wasted his patrimonie: wee haue giuen our selues with him as seruants vnto sinne, which hath tyrannously tormented vs as it did him. Thus haue we borne the image of the earthie, God graunt vs grace that we may beare the image of the heauenlie, as this man did, of which now immediately we are to entreat.

The end of the first Booke of the progresse of the prodigall sonne.

THE SECOND BOOKE,

Which intreateth of the Regresse and happie returne *home of the prodigall sonne.*

The first Chapter.

Of our necessarie returne from sinne, and conversion vnto God: typically shadowed, and set forth vnto vs, in the example of this mans returne.

AS there is nothing more hurtfull, and detestable then sinne, which calleth vs from God, estraungeth vs from the faith, maketh vs aliants from the common wealth of Israel, and last of all doth subiect vs vnto eternall death: so is there nothing more holesome and profitable then Repentance, whereby like lost sheepe wee returne againe vnto the shepheard of our soules, we are Citizens with the saints, and of the housholde of God, and are made partakers in his eternall kingdome of eternall life.

Similitude Iſſo bee thou rideſt vpon a beaſt which is wilde, thou

thou putteſt ſpurres vpon thy feete, and thou holdeſt hard the bridle in thy hande, to curbe and to keepe him in if he offereth to caſt thee, or to runne too faſt with thee, and to ſpurre and pricke him forward if he be ſulleinlie dull, and will not trauaile with thee, thou muſt take this courſe with thy bodie, which is thy beaſt, & with thine inordinat luſts and affections, which are ſenſuall and beaſtly. If it would riotouſly ſurfeit with exceſſe, and there is no ſtay in it, or otherwiſe be too ſlack, or keep at a ſtay, and abide ſtill in ſinfulneſſe: wee muſt bridle him and quicken him, and put him from this courſe, and make him pliable and conformable to his dutie. Go not in anie wiſe after thine owne luſtes as *Syracides* aduiſeth, but wiſh thou to bee ledde into the pathes of righteouſneſſe, as *Dauid* humbly praieth. For fooliſh are wee and ignorant, and as a beaſt before thee. *Eccleſ.* 18 *Pſal* 119 *Pſal.* 73

This *Acolaſtus* and prodigall perſon, chalketh out the way, and by a right line leadeth vs all by the right path: wee haue beene wilde with him, let vs be tamed with him: wee haue ſtraied with him, let vs goe home with him: wee haue gone from God, and from our ſelues with him, let vs returne to God, and to our ſelues with him.

He was before as a frantick fellow, altered in his wittes and out of himſelfe, and therefore in the beginning of his conuerſion it is ſaid, that *He came to himſelfe*. Which Paraphraſis and phraſe of ſpeech liuely expreſſeth the nature of ſin, which is a madnes, and departure from our ſelues, and the Sin is madneſſe.

condition of our true Repentance, which is a returne and comming to our selues.

The names of repentance.

The proper names which are giuen vnto Repentance, and which signifie repentance are giuen thē in this sense: The Hebrew word *Schuba* and *Teschuba*, which are vsed of the prophets seeme to be Tropical, and borowed speeches takē from trauellers that are out of their way, & after lōg wandring being tolde thereof doe turne into the way But the Greeke word μετανοια commonlie vsed in the newe Testament iumpeth in signification with this rearme here vsed in this present hystorie, which commeth *ab* ἄνοια, which is follie and madnesse, whereby through corruption of reason and iudgement, we know not what to do, but are like madde men that are from our selues. The correction of this madnesse and reformation of this foolishnesse is called μετανοια, whereby vpon due deliberation with our selues, and better aduise wee returne vnto our selues. The Latin worde *Pœnitentia* deriued *à Pœna*, agreeth likewise with our purpose verie much, for our sin breeding shame which is *quædam pœna*, a kind of punishment, in a tedious loathsomnes and wearisomnes of this punishment we purpose a cōuersion. This man through affliction was so humbled and punished, & so ashamed of himself as he was not himself, and the due regard therof in a sorrowful submission altered & chāged him, and brought him to himselfe. This was most necessarie for him to doe, as without which there had beene no recouerie of him. For his comming to him-

Mat. 3. 4
Mar. 1. 8

selfe

selfe was the knowledge of himselfe, the cheefest poynt of wisedome, and the originall of Repentance, the ordinarie and especiall meane of his saluation. For in this comming vnto himselfe, he bethought himselfe from whence hee first fell, into what hee fell, and in what case hee nowe stood, This touched him to the quick and pricked him at the heart, and wrought his conuersion.

This his example must bee our direction, and must be vnto vs as the clowdie piller, which went before the Israelites to shewe them the way: and like the fire that gaue them light in the night seeson. We must commune with hur owe hearts, and enter into our selues, and consider our condition: wee haue run a madding without sense of sin, it becommeth vs therefore to be sober vnto saluation by acknowledging our sins. Without a dutifull acknowledgement of our sins, there is no remission and pardon for our sins. Christ neuer cured any person diseased, who did not first acknowledg himself to be diseased. The better we know the nature of our maladie, the more ardentlie weeaffect and desire remedie. Therefore God, as *Augustine* saith, the more to kindle and inflame this desire of our recouerie, would haue vs first be touched with a feeling of our infirmitie. The Lord therefore of such whome he cured first of all communed with them aboute their infirmityes, that they themselues might acknowledge their miseries: As with *Agar* what it was that shee did? And with the diseased man, whether hee woulde bee made whole: and

The knowledge of our sinnes the beginning repentance. *Exod.* 13

Aug. epist. 1

Genes. 21. *John.* 5

with infinite others remembred in the ſcriptures. This ſeemeth to be ỹ cauſe why chriſt did not cure any mad men that were gone frō themſelues, becauſe mad men can not come vnto themſelues by the knowledge of themſelues, but when they are fooles, they thinke themſelues wiſe, they ſo ſooth themſelues in their fooliſhnes,& madnes,as there is no reforming them or reducing thē to obedience. The firſt ſtep to health is the feeling of our ſicknes: for what man wil come to a Phiſition to be healed, who cannot be perſwaded that he is diſeaſed? The more a mā thinketh that he is in health, the leſſe he thinketh ỹ he hath need of help. He is dangerouſly ſicke who doth not know himſelf to be ſick. For he is blinded with deceit, and periſheth for want of knowledge of himſelfe. So is it with the ſoule, if being weak & brought verie low by reaſon of our ſin, we do not complaine & finde our ſelues grieued, how ſhould it be reſtored? how ſhould the woūds thereof that ſtinke and are corrupt, bee mollified with oile, and bound vp with cloathes, when as we hide our affected parts,& will take no knowleddge of them? There are too many who diſport themſelues with their wicked doings, & make no conſcience and account of ſin, perſwading themſelues tha all is done well which they do, be they neuer ſo il. Theſe be thoſe, who do boaſt thēſelues ỹ they can do miſchief,& do ſet forth wickednes as a law.

rom. 2 ſimilitude

They reioice, as *Salomon* ſaith, *when they haue done euill.* Theſe men do behold their faces in a glaſſe which is hollow,& deceiueth them, which preſenteth

teth vnto them a contrary image to that which it is indeed. They behold themselues in the inside of a bright siluer spoone, which obiecteth to our view a perposterous & ouertwhart resemblãce of our face, with the beard & chin vpward, and the forehead downward. Such as are franticke, when they are in worst case they think thẽselues best, they laugh & are merry, and make mowes & spare not, they wilfully resist all means of their recouery, they are violent & hurtfull to their Phisitions and friends, who do seeke to do them good. The estate of such as it is most fearfull: so it is very much to be lamented. A similitud

A similitud

Christ could not refraine weeping, when he saw the people of Ierusalem so affected, so distracted in their senses, & bereaued of their wits, as they had no knowledge of their time of visitatiõ. In this respect doth God because it is so needful, so peremptorilie vrge the dutifull acknowlegdement & cõfession of our sins. When as *Cain* would haue hidden his sin frõ god, how did god labor with him to make him know it, by quickning him with questiõs, & laying before him the things which he had done? *Where is thy brother Abel*, saith god vnto him? Whẽ ẏ wold not serue, but he did shift it of with an other question: *am I my brothers keeper?* god left him not so, but sifted him more narrowly, demaunding further of him what he had don? If he wold haue com to him selfe, & acknowledged what he had done, his sinne though red and bloody as the skarlet, should haue beene washed and made as white as wooll, his dutifull confession had effected his saluation. Luke 19

Gen. 4

Peter sinned hainously in denying his master, yet by taking notice of it in due time, and by cõming to himself he obtained pardon, and was restored to his office. *Paul* was a blasphemer & a bloody man, whē he was a *Saul*, for as the other *Saul* persecuted *Dauid*, so this *Saul* persecuted the son of *Dauid*, & the son of God, & made hauock of the church: but being stroken flat vnto the ground by a light from heauen, euen at noon day, wherby he was lightned with a knowledge of himself, he became a worthy professor of Christ, & a myrror amõg martyrs, who suffred for his sake. He was receiued vnto mercy, as he himself witnesseth. *Mary Magdalen*, from whõ were cast out seuen diuels, was a diuelish sinner, sinning without blushing: yet hauing remorse, & comming to her selfe, going behind our sauiour Christ, and behauing her self with all modestie and teares, and falling downe at his feet with a sorrowfull repentance of hir former sinnes, shee was graciously entertained, and made a vessell of his mercie.

It was long before the thief did come to himself, he did put it off so lõg as it could be, euē to the last houre and moment of time: yet to shew that repentance can not come too late, though it cānot come too soon, he was also absolued, & that day with christ was his soule in Paradise in his fathers kingdome.

And this was the happines of this prodigall person, his returne and conuersion preuented his damnation, and was the means of his eternall saluation.

Let euery sinner therfore consider of this, let him denie all vnrighteousnes, and giue himselfe vnto a holie

holie obedience, and learne to know himselfe. Let him remember what the Church writeth vnto the angel of the church of Ephesus. *Remember from whence thou art fallen & repent, & do the first works* Reuel. 2 *Returne O sinners vnto your hearts*, as *Esay* coun- Esey. 46 selleth. Consider who thou art, whence y' camest, where thou art, and whither thou art going. Thou art become a verie learned doctor, if thou hast learned to know thy selfe & thy sins. This learning and knowledge wil more auaile thee then all vaine philosophy, then all thy study in the liberal arts, then al thy humane knowledge whatsoeuer. The knowledge of thy self will teach thee humilitie, humilitie will make thee stand in feare of thy God, the feare of thy God is the beginning of that wisdom which passeth vnderstanding. Many know many things, yet know they not themselues: they knowe others, but they know not themselues: But another man is our Christall glasse, wherein we see our selues. Let vs therefore looke vpon an other, & especially vpon this mans sin that we may know our sinne: and this mans repentance that we may likewise repent with him.

The second Chapter.

Of the prodigall sonne his resolution of the amendment of his life, and of returning to his father: the fundamentall point of our true repentance.

THis prodigall sonne no sooner came by descending into himselfe, into the knowledge of his sinne: but he

he proceeded immediatly vnto a loathſomneſſe of himſelfe, and hatred of his ſinne. He purpoſeth abſolutely to renounce his former courſe, and nowe deliberateth, and meditateth with himſelfe of amendment of his life.

He doth not deſperately fall into theſe or ſuch like conceites, or thus reaſon with himſelfe in his troubled mind. Go to, for as much as I do ſee my ſelfe deſtitute of friends, perſecuted of my enimies, vtterlie forſaken and without hope of comforte: what remedy? I will wallowe my ſelfe in this myre and dirte, and ſtil remaine a vagabond and forlorn perſon, and dwell among ſwine: or otherwiſe the ſooner to auoide this extremitie I will trie extremities. I will helpe my ſelfe by robberie and wrong: I will vſe ſome ſleytes, ſhiftes, and guiles to bring in a liuing: I will not feare to make an ende of my ſelfe, to bring this my miſerie and ſlauerie to an ende. He hath none of theſe melancholie and mad muzes: neither is he enuious, either of the felicitie of his eldeſt brother, or of the proſperitie of his fathers ſeruants. But his reſolution is to vſe all ſubmiſſion, to be ſorrowfull for his ſinnes, to depart from them, and to returne in obedience to his father, and to aske forgiueneſſe of them: we muſt conforme our ſelues vnto this man, if we will bee trulie repentant with this man. True repentance eſpecially conſiſteth in the acknowledgement of our ſinnes, in a godly ſorrowe and hatred of them, and in a purpoſed reſolution to forſake them. All which parts were compleat and perfect, in the ex-

e nature
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tance.

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ample of this man.

They vainly sooth themselues, who thinke they can repent, and yet doe abide, and remaine in their sinnes. And therefore they may with *Esau*, hunte after a blessing, and go without it. God regardeth not the flowers and faire shewe of repentance, but hee would haue the fruites which true repentance bringeth forth. Bring forth (saieth *Iohn* the Baptist to the Pharisies and Sadduces, who like vnto the fig tree had nothing but faire leaues) the fruites worthie of amendment of life. It is not enough for vs to confesse our selues sinners, but with this confession wee must leaue our sinnes and returne vnto our father. If wee still remaine vsurers, fornicators, drunkardes, and such like sinners, there is no repentance in vs, and God refuseth this repentance which we offer him, as the gold which is too light, and the graine which wanteth measure. Our onely Anchorhold, and refuge is the Lord, wee must returne home and reconcile our selues to him from whome wee haue departed by our sinne and wickednesse. We must weep with *Ezechias*, and turne our faces to the walle, wee must cast downe our selues at the feete of Christ, with *Mary Magdalen* the sinner: we must lament our sinnes bitterlie with *Peter*: we must crie vnto the Lord, with our voice with the Niniuites: we must be conuerted, and amend our liues, with the repentant Iewes: we must be changed by the renewing of our mind: and being made whole, we must sinne no more, least a greater plague do come vnto vs.

Mat.3

Isai.38

Luk.7.

Matt.26

Ionæ.3

Actes.2

Rom.12.

Iohn.5

The

¶ The ſubiect and grounde of an vnfained repentance is our exchange of our former life, and an alteration of the whole man. The mind muſt be humbled with a godly ſorrowe for our former ſinnes, which is the ſorrowe the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of, that maketh to ſaluation.

2. Cor. 7.

Wherefore ô man conſider with thy ſelfe, what calamity, and deſtruction thy ſinne doth lead thee vnto, and bewaile thy caſe in time, and return with ſpeed from this danger, which otherwiſe muſt enſue vpon thee.

ſimilitude

If thou ſhouldeſt ſee a moſt comely, and beautifull virgine, of great birth and wealth, and paſsing wiſdome, to bee married to a ſorded and ſtinking companion, were not the ſight ruſull? and wouldeſt thou not lament hir vnhappy condition? thou couldeſt do no leſſe. But this is thy caſe, and thou art the ſame, for thy ſoule as the kinges daughter is exceeding glorious, fairer then the daughters of Sion, and the children of men, *comly as the tentes of Kedar, and as the curtains of Salomon.* Wed it not therfore vnto ſlauiſh ſinne, let her not be polluted, and defiled with iniquity.

ans. 1

ſimilitude

The Bucke that is hunted, and purſued with hounds, mourneth and howleth: our ſinnes do hunt vs, and follow vs as houndes, let vs therefore mourn and taſte of ſorrow for it.

dg. 11

The daughter of *Iepthe* went a part to the mountaines, to bewaile hir Virginitie two moneths together with her mayden companie becauſe ſhee was to die: ſo ſithens wee muſt die by

reaſon

reason of our sinnes, and wee knowe not howe soone, oh let vs bee solitary, and bewaile our sinnes with the saints that feare God, & repent our selues of them.

Godly men haue greatly mourned for other men, as *Samuel* for *Saul*, because God had cast him off; and *Dauid* for *Absalon*, who was slain for his wickednes: much more thē ought we to mourn for our selues, and rend our hearts, and not our garmentes, for our infinite transgressions, and to turne vnto the Lord. 1. Sam. 15 2. Sam. 18

When as *Michah* hastily pursued after those, who had stolen away his gods, and they demanded of him what he ailed: he dolefully answereth, *Haue ye stolne away my gods from me, and doe ye aske mee what I aile,* Iudg. 17

This is the sorrowe that bringeth ioy at the last, and shal wipe away al teares from our eies. For as the Psalmist saith, *They that go out mourning shall returne home with ioie, and bring their sheaues with them.* Consider of what efficacie and vertue it is, and howe auaileable it will bee to the godlie, when as it hath beene of that grace and strength, as to bring a blessing euen vppon the wicked. The efficacy of a godly sorrow.

Esau by his weeping extorted and wronga blessing from his father *Isaac*, albeit his blessing was gone before hee came, and bestowed vppon *Iacob*. Gen. 27.

As the enemies of the Israelites, the whole hoast Exod. 14

of

of the Egyptians perished in the waters of the red sea so in the brackish and salt waters of repentance all our sinnes the most capital and deadly enemies to vs the Israel and people of God, shall be vtterly ouerthrowne and cast as it were into the bottome of the sea.

Iudith.7. Wherefore as *Holofernes* when he besieged *Bethulia*, that hee might easier vanquish it, stopped the fountaines and passages of the water, that should run vnto it, to battle and to refresh it: so our aduersarie the diuel, as another *Holofernes*, that he might the sooner haue the conquest of vs whom hee daily doth besiege, hee woulde stoppe the streames, and conduct pipes of our teares, that they shoulde not gush out of our soules, to water, and refresh vs in the middest of our extremitie.

Mat.2. Wherefore kil *Herode* that Christ may liue: slay thy sinnes, that thy soule may liue. If wee liue after *Gal 5.* the flesh we shal die, but if we die to the flesh wee shal liue: and *Herod* being dead Christ wil returne againe into Egypt.

As *Iacob* was called *Iacob*, which signifieth a *Gen.32.* supplanter, before hee was called *Israel*, which is seeing God: so wee must first bee *Iacob* and supplant our sinnes, and take them by the hee[el] as *Iacob* did *Esau*, and giue them a fall, before wee can be Israelites, and see God, and be partakers of his kingdome.

Exod.19 As God gaue commandement to stone the beast, which would approch and touch the mountaine:

taine: so we drawing neere by heauenly meditations to Gods most holy mountaine, it is enioined vs to kill the beast, our sensuall pleasures, and sinfull lusts, which are nothing else but beastly,

Wherefore poure out thy heart like water, as *Hieremy* exhorteth thee before the face of God: like water not like honie, oyle, or wine. If any other liquour beside water bee poured out of a vessell, somewhat of the liquour will hang vnto the sides, or remaine in the bottome especiallie clammy, and linie substance as oyle, and honey, or at the least the sauour of that liquour is still retained, and remaineth in the cup: if both these faile yet will the glasse, vessell, or cup, draw vnto it the outward colour of that liquor, as it were wholie altered and changed into that colour. But water doth none of these, for it runneth out clearely, it leaueth neither substance, colour, or sauour at all behind it. Therefore we must (as the Prophet warneth) poure forth our spirits like water, as to our power we may leaue no remainder, no dregs, no substance, no shewe of sinne behind vs, but poure it out al out of the vessels of our hearts,

We must repent our selues of all our sinnes. *Lament.2*

Wherefore as God commanded *Saul* to destroy *Amalech*, and to reserue no creature aliue, neither sheepe, or oxen, or any other thing: so God commandeth vs vtterly that we doe abolish the whole body of sinne, that no part of sinne bee kept aliue in vs.

1. *Sam.15*

Rom.6.

When as the Israelites were vnder *Pharao* his bondage, and when as Israell was to sacrifice vnto

Exod.10

the

the Lorde, *Pharao* spake thus vnto *Moses* and to *Aaron*. *Go sacrifice vnto the Lord only let your sheep and cattel remaine*. Hee would haue a pledge and assurance of their returne, and so would the Diuell haue of his captiues, whome hee holdeth in there sinne when they should depart from their sinne by true repentance, and returne vnto GOD. Hee would haue some sinne that wee shoulde not repent of that we may leaue as a pawne in his hande of our comming againe: But aunswere thou the Diuell as *Moses* and *Aaron* did aunswere *Pharao*. *All our Cattell shall goe with vs*, their shall not remaine a hoofe behinde vs, there shal no sinne tarrie behinde vs, all shall be slaine and vtterly destroied.

Act.12 As the Angell, when he deliuered *Peter* out of prison, hee willed him to girde himselfe, and to binde on his sandales, not to leaue them behind him, least hee should bee mooued to retire againe for them: so wee going out of the prison of sinne, let vs not leaue anie sinne behinde, which maie cause vs to returne and may drawe vs backe after it.

Leuit.8 The Bullocke that was slaine by *Aaron* the priest for a sinne offering, was not onelie sacrificed, but also all the fatte that was vppon the inwardes, the kall of the liuer, and the two kidneyes, with their fatte were burnt vppon the altar, yea the Hyde, the flesh, the doung was burnt with fire without the hoast, as the Lord had commaunded *Moses*. So wee for our attonement, must

offer

offer this sinne offering, wee must burne with fire, and consume all our sinnes, the very doung and excrements must be done away, there must bee nothing left.

We must serue sin as the altars of idolatry, which God commanded should be throwne downe, and crushed in peeces. Our sinnes which we haue worshipped, must be serued as the Calfe, which the Israelites adored: *Moses* grinded it to powder, and gaue it to the people of Israel to drinke, that so hee might be sure nothing should remaine of it. Deut. 7.

But this tractate of true repentaunce, will seeme needlesse to some, to whome repentance it selfe seemeth needles. For there be those who think that it needeth not, or booteth not, to repent themselues of that which cannot bee helped, to bee sorrowfull for that which cannot bee called backe: sinnes that are done cannot bee vndone, and therefore it is in vaine to bee sorrowfull for them. This is a lewd and vngodly obiection, and the argument most weake. Obiection

Trewe it is, that euill deedes and actions committed cannot bee reuersed, yet are they not so paste as if nothing remained present, for the memorie, the remorse, the guilt of them remaineth. It was sometime tolde a Philosopher that he ought not to mourne for his dead son because there was no remedie, all the sorrowe and lamentation that he made could not reuiue him: but ỹ Philosopher answered, that therefore hee had iust cause of lamenting because it coulde not bee otherwise, so

ought

ought the godly to grieue that they haue ſinned, and alſo becauſe it could not be otherwiſe.

Obiection

Otherſome there be, who when as they ſee, that of their ſinne there hath come good (as God out of euill thinges can bring good thinges to paſſe) they thinke this kind of ſinne hath a priuiledge, and protection, and that it is not to bee repented of, of vs. Shall we repent our ſelues (ſay they) of that which hath done vs ſo much good? nay, let vs rather bee glad of it and reioice. There was a religious woman, by profeſsion, who hauing had two baſe children, being willed by hir confeſſour in time to bee ſorrowfull, for this looſe and lewde behauiour: ſhe anſwered, that there was no reaſon of that, for as much as thoſe children proued ſo good men, the one beeing the great ſchooleman *Gratian*, and the other *Peter Lombarde* the maiſter of the Sentences: ſhe rather wiſhed that ſhe had more ſuch children, ſhee was ſo far from ſorrowing, for thoſe which ſhe already had. But this conceite is as idle as the former, and hath no reaſon in it. The Apoſtle ſetteth it down as a flat concluſion, and Canon in diuinitie, that we muſt not ſinne, that good may come of it. *Shall we ſinne then* (ſaith he) *that grace may abound? Nay, God forbid. How ſhall wee that are dead to ſinne liue yet therein?*

Anſwere

Rom. 6

Wherefore let vs who are burdened with our ſinnes, come before God, in a godlie ſorrowe for them, that he might eaſe vs of them. Let the ſtraie ſheepe returne vnto his ſhepheard, the ſicke patient to his Phiſitian, the ſinner to his Sauiour, the loſt

ſonne

sonne to his mercifull father, and the creature to his Creator who is blessed for euer.

The third Chapter.

That wee must with the Prodigall sonne, ioine faith to our repentance, the better to incite and pricke vs forwarde, to rtturne vnto our father.

VNlesse a sinner, with the knowledge of his sinne, and his godly sorrowe conceiued for the same, doeth also strengthen himselfe with faith, and hopeth of the pardon and forgiuenesse of it: it nothing at all auaileth him, it rather serueth as a sworde to wounde him, then a medicine for to heale him. It is to no purpose for a man to knowe where hee may haue a sworde, to take awaie his life: rather let vs seeke where wee maie haue a salue to cure our deadlie woundes and to preserue our life. But our only comfort and remedy is our faith which withstandeth all temptations, ouercommeth all assaultes, and preuenteth despetation.

Faith is vnto vs, as the fire and clowdy piller was vnto the Israelites, seruing to conduct them in their way out of Egypt, thorough the vaste wilderneſſe: it guideth vs in the right way, whilest wee trauaile in the solitarie desart of this world towards the heauenly Canaan. Exod. 14

similitude

The strength of an house is in the foundation, and if that bee sure the building will not shake, for anie storme and tempest that doeth beate against it. Faith is the foundation and substance of our building. *Faith is the substaunce of things hoped for, and the euidence of thinges that are not seene.*

Heb. 11

Whilest the sterne and maine Mast of a ship is sounde, if in a mightie tempest, the mariners shall caste out their Anchors into the sea, and disburden the shippe of her heauie fraight, it is to bee preserued and saued from shipwracke; but if these faile, and suffer wracke by the weather, it cannot bee that it shoulde escape destruction: so men that are emptied as it were of their vertues, and suffer their godlinesse dailie to diminish; yet so long as faith lasteth, and remaineth stedfast, they cannot quite perish: but let them loose this, there is no helpe for them, they loose altogether. This similitude is *Paules*, which hee vseth to this ende writing thus to *Timothie*: *This commaundement commit I vnto thee, sonne* Timotheus, *that thou shouldest fight a good fight, hauing faith, and a good conscience, which some haue put away, and as concerning faith haue made a shipwrack.*

1. Tim. 1

similitude

As Merchauntes, albeit they haue susteined great losses, for two yeares together, yet a third lucky yeare maketh vp all againe: so though wee haue lost the good graces of God with this prodigall sonne, yet if at length wee haue a good faith with him, we shall well enough ouercome, and re-

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couer our former losse, and be in good estate, and happinesse againe.

What faith this man hath, appeareth by his wordes: For after hee acknowledged his fathers bountie to his hired seruants, he harteneth himselfe with the hope of greater kindnesse, to bee extended towardes him vppon his returne, beeing a sonne. And therefore premising and meditating vppon this: *Howe manie hyred seruauntes in my Fathers house haue breadenough, and I die for hunger?* Hee cheereth himselfe with a confidence of comfort, saying to himselfe, *I will arise and go to my Father.*

Hee placed his wordes in verie good ranke speaking to great purpose, to mooue affections. *I: a Sonne. They: Seruauntes. They: haue enough.* I: *die for hunger. They manie:* and yet are replenished, I but one, and loe I am famished. Therefore it must needes bee well with me, if I returne home, as it is with them, who are now at home. I wil therefore hie me home, and appeare before my father.

Wherfore vnto the true repentance of our sinne, consequentlie of necessitie, a true faith must bee adioyned, which onelie discerneth trueth from falsehoode, true repentance from hypocrisie, which stayeth it selfe wholie vppon the worde of GOD, the foundation thereof, this word being the argument, and subiect of our faith. If therefore we do repent, and bewaile our sinnes: it is manifest that we are moued, and touched with Gods word,

that it hath pricked our hearts. And this good tree cannot but bring forth good fruit, it cannot be idle in the harts of the faithful.

In this respect, learned men do make Faith, and Contrition, the two essential parts and members of repentance. Contrition, whereby we repent that is past: and faith wherby we hope of grace to come. Wee goe not so fa re with them, as to make faith a part of repentance: but wee hold it needefull that it bee matched with repentance, that it goe hande in hand with it, that it be not diuorced and diuided from it. In man there are two partes whereuppon hee doth consist, the minde and the bodie, yet we saie not that the minde is a parte of the bodie, or the bodie of the minde. The like may be said of faith and repentaunce. In the Sunne there is his orbicular and rounde proportion, and his light and brightnesse: yet though they bee conioyned, neither is the forme of it a parte of this his brightnesse, neither is his brightnesse, anie part of his forme. So faith and repentaunce goe togither in the faithfull, and are not separated; yet one of them is not a member of the other: faith is ioyned to it as the originall of it, the only motiue of it, like vnto a Captaine that giueth the onset. This holdeth vp our slipperie feet from falling, and this lifteth vp those that are downe: this maketh vs to goe thorough fire and water, and ordereth our goings: this is the victorie that ouercommeth the world.

similitude

similitude

This maketh vs to march out couragiously with

David

Dauid against *Goliah* of Gath, that vncircumcised Philistine, it teacheth our handes to war, and our fingers to fight, and our armes to breake euen a bowe of steele. *Marcellinus* Bishop of Rome, hauing before sacrificed vnto Idols, and by faith moued to repentance, boldly preached that which he denied before, became a martyr for the trueth sake, and confirmed it with his deaths

Marcellinus B. of Rome.

Cyprian in his sermon and treatise *de lapsis*, maketh mention of *Castus* & *Æmilius*, who violently coacted to an abiuration of the trueth, through extremity of tormentes, afterwarde beeing reclaimed thorough remorse of conscience, repenting themselues exceedingly of their weakenesse, grewe so strong in the faith, as they ouercame the fire, and brake the yce valiantlie, and couragiously did vndergoe the tyrannie of their tormentors.

Castus & Aemilius,

But what need we heape vp forreine examples, seeing wee haue so many domesticall. The late time of Queene *Mary* affordeth vs many. Master *Foxe* in his booke of Monuments, doth largely intreat of them: among others in London, there was a certaine priest, who thorough feare of the crueltie, and bitternesse of death which was before his eies, abiured and renounced the true religion and embraced Popery: But the Balaamite Bishop, the bloudie Bull of Basan, not contented with his simple abiuration, demaunded the signature of his hande, and seale vnto a prescribed forme of recantation, which hee gaue him; which this simple

Bonner.

poore soule accordinglie consigning, and redelliuering the schedule to the Bishop, departed from him. But returning home hee conceiued such sorrowe and repentance of his sinne, as it working by a zealous and inuincible faith, he reuersed his handwriting, resigned his consignment, and willed the tyrant to doe with him what he list. Let vs therefore be armed with this armour, and we shall bee more then conquerors, in him that loueth vs. Bee wee sorrowfull for our sinnes, and haue wee faith, and sure hope of the forgiuenes of our sinnes: Faith, without repentaunce is meere dissimulation; and repentaunce without faith causeth desperation.

Matt. 3 The Baptist who preached to the Sadducesof iudgement, and shewed them the axe that was put to the Tree, to cutte them off by reason of their sinnes, doth also comfort them with a song of mercie, pointing with his finger at the Lambe

Ihn. 1 of God, who shoulde take awaie the sinnes of the world.

Peter, after that he had pricked the hearts of the Iewes, by grating their eares, with a rehearsall of the circumstances of their crueltie, in desiring a murderer to bee giuen them, and in crucifieng

Ac the Lorde of life: hee healed immediatelie these

Ies. 3 woundes againe, and gaue them a plaister to laie vpon their soares willing them to repent and perswading them to the faith of the forgiuenes of their sinnes.

Paule when hee was a *Saule*, was no sooner

stroken

stroken downe, and felled vnto the grounde, by a light which appeared vnto him at noone day: but hee was raised vp againe with a heauenly voice, which comforted and instructed him what hee should doe.

Let vs therefore walke in the kinges high waie betweene feare and hope. Let feare affright vs with the feeling of our sinnes: and let vs bee comforted with the hope we haue of the remission of our sins. The knowledge of our sins, together with Gods mercie which pardoneth our sinnes, beeing duely considered, maketh vs degenerate and lost children with the prodigal sonne to returne home vnto our Father.

The fourth Chapter.

Of the benefit of afflictions: an especiall meane which God vseth to worke our repentance, and to cause our returne to our fathers house, with the prodigall sonne

BVt the meanes which this louing and mercifull father vseth, to drawe home his wandring, and farre gone sonne, are meete to be considered, of which there are manie, and seuerall kindes; but they may all of them, summarilie be reduced vnto these two chiefe heades. The first is his externe and outward calling: the second is his interne and inward

inwarde lightning vs.

From the first roote, springeth these branches. His calling vs by his worde, whereby hee teacheth vs his will and our duetie. His priuate admonitions which are either giuen vs by our friendes for our good, in kindnesse to winne vs; or else, by our enemies, in their bitter affections, verie forcible in regarde of the hurt they intende vs, of themselues to reclaime vs. Adde hereto his punishmentes, his signes of anger, his most dreadfull iudgments, which are infinite and vnspeakeable shewed in the heauen, the water, and the earth, all which are sounde alarums and loude thunderpeales, to rouse vs out of the deade sleepe and securitie, in which we liue.

But these neither seuerally nor iointlie take effect, vnlesse our heartes bee inwardly mollified, naturallie obdurate, and of themselues most deafe vnto all outwarde warninges. There must bee a lightening and illumination inwarde, before wee will bee moued with the calling which is outwarde. Of the which purposing peculiarlie to entreate in his fit place, in the third Booke, vpon the occasion offered by his fathers seeing him a farre off, I leaue it at this time; for our drift is now to shew the vertue, force, and manifold vse, of his outwarde iudgements, what deepe impresions they make in mens affections, altering and reclaiming their degenerate dispositions.

The fulnesse of bread, and aboundance of pleasures, which this yong man had at will in his fathers

house,

house, puffed him vp with pride, made him wilde and wanton, and bred in him a loathsomnesse and contempt of them. Hereupon he gaue himselfe to all riot and excesse, he became a trauailer, spending without ceasing, without order and discretion, vntill all his portion and patrimonie was consumed. Immediatelie he came to a lowe ebbe, he fell suddenly into all calamitie, and this affliction gaue him vnderstanding, and wrought his conuersion. For being in the toppe and height of his prosperitie, God first of all punished him with want and scarcitie, whereby hee that bought the constrained courtesies of manie mens knees, with the expences of so manie pounds, being out of his money, he was out of request; they who before did reuerence him as a God, did now reiect him and despise him as a dogge. Forthwith slauerie ouertooke his beggerie, his bondage as most noysome, so was it most grieuousome, for it brought leanesse euen vppon his soule, one might tell all his bones, and his strength failed him, beeing now forgotten as a deade man, and vtterlie forsaken. Hee became a worme and no man, an abiect from the companie and fellowship of men, liuing among beastes, hunting after husks, louing nowe asmuch the fragments and reuersion of hogges, as he loathed before in his fathers house the varietie of all delights of the sonnes of men.

These meanes God vsed as motiues to stirre vp his dull spirits, and to quicken him afresh, to pluck him by the eares, and to lift him vp from his horrible

rible dunghill of mire and clay, and filthie swine, and to set his feete in a large roome, & to place him among princes, euen the princes of his people.

Afflictions do bring vs home to God.

This is the course which commonlie God taketh with his vnrulie and rebellious children, to bring them home againe. *Voluit pater flagellare longinquum, vt reciperet propinquum.* His father would scourge him a farre off, because hee would receiue him neere at hand. *Nam si bene mihi esset sine te, nollem forsitan redire ad te.* For if I might doe well without thee, I would not doubtlesse returne vnto thee.

Aug. tom. 8 in Psal. 138 August. ibid.

a similitude

Wherefore, because afflictions doe weane vs from our sinnes, and bring vs vnto God, it is most needfull that God should humble vs with afflictions. And hee doth thereby as the tender mother with her young child, who rubbeth the ends of her breasts with mustard, or some other thing, to make the infant forsake his milke, and to leaue the dug.

similitude

If a mightie Prince should promise vnto anie, all his wealth and treasure which is in his treasure-house, who coulde vnlocke and open the doore of it, and should therewithall giue vs two keyes, the one of golde which could not open it, and the other of iron which could open it: though the golde be of a better substance by nature then the iron, yet in respect that it serueth not to so good an ende, he is but a foole who refuseth the iron key, to make choyse of the golden. God promiseth vnto vs the treasures of his grace, if we will striue to enter into this gate, wee see manifestlie that a golden key

that

that is riches and prosperitie in this worlde, will not open it: but the iron key sorrow and aduersitie, will open that which is shutte, and bring vs to aboundaunce. Oh therefore if we bee wise take wee this in our hande and let vs goe to the locke with it.

Before the grape can yeeld his orient pleasant wine, the iuyce thereof must first bee pressed out by the force of the Winepresse. Wee muste first bee pressed, and oppressed with afflictions, before our best iuyce can bee wringed from vs, and wee can more euidentlie shewe our faith and patience. A similitude

If God mightilie blesseth our estate, enricheth vs with wealth, backeth vs with friends, encreaseth vs with children, what maruell is it if we doe serue God: Do we serue God for nought, as the diuell said of *Iob*? But the case is now altered, it is rather to be maruelled, if in such an estate wee doe not forget God, and neglect to serue him. Prosperitie leadeth vs farre from God with the prodigall son, and aduersitie bringeth vs home againe with him, and therefore God sendeth it. *Iob.* 8

When the young childe runneth from the mother, and will not come vnto her, the mother causeth one to make it afrayde with a vizard, or the like, and immediately the child runneth to the mother. We are as yong children, who neuer runne to God but when aduersitie and feare driueth vs. A similitu

No sooner God prospereth vs, but we looke from him, our eyes are onely vpon him in our need. A simili

When

We are like dogs, who so long as they are hungrie, they fixe and fasten their eies vppon their maister: but hee no sooner casteth downe a crust or a bone, but they presently looke downwarde, and they runne after that: but when that is eaten, their eies as before are lifted vp againe, and they beholde their maister.

Gen. 7 The more the waters of the flood encreased, the more the Arke of *Noah* was lifted vp: the more the waters of our trouble doe encrease, the more we do lift vp our hearts vnto God.

The more God afflicteth vs, the better we learne him. An Inkeeper will better take knowledge of a similitude that guest that bestoweth some blowes of him, then hee will of him who spendeth much money Gen. 40 of him.

Ioseph his brethren would not vouchsafe to know him in the time of their prosperity, but famishment made them to go into Egypt, and to finde him out. When God striketh a lande with famine, wee howle and crie vnto him, then wee come with our sackes to Egypt, and then we bring our best presents to the man,

Exod. 22 The more the people of Israel were persecuted, the more feruentlie cried they vnto God: wee are these old *Israelites*, the more we are afflicted, the more we are obedient.

Act. 9 The conuersion of *Saul* began at his affliction which made him a *Paul*: hee was no sooner stroken with a lightning to the ground, but the heart of him was lightned, and he saide vnto God: *Lord*

what

what wilt thou haue me do?

Affliction is one of the strings belonging to the Lords bowe, which he maketh re adie agaynst the face of vs, when we do withstand him, wherebyhe slayeth our sinnes in vs. What mooued *Adam* to a better remembraunce of himselfe, and the commaundement of God, but the knowledge of his nakednes, the voyce of God which called him in the Garden, the hard taske he did put him vnto to digge the ground, and with his sweate to get his liuing all the dayes of his life, his casting out of Paradise, whereby he lined as a banished man vpon the face of the earth? God followed him with his iudgements, that he might make him partaker of his mercies, and draw him to himselfe. *Gen.3*

The like course was taken with *Dauid* in his sinne, when he wilfullie had committed adulterie and murther: God not onely sent him his Preacher *Nathan*, to rebuke him of his sinne, but he sent him afflictions to drawe him from his sinne, as the incest committed with his daughter *Thamar* by her brother *Ammon*, the slaughter of his son *Ammon*, the sedition of his sonne *Absalon*, his ciuill insurrection, his most fearefull execution. All these as summoners cited his conscience to appeare at gods Court & constrayned him to come home to God, in all obedience, from whom he had so started by his former disobedience.

The Scriptures do euerie where set downe vnto vs this vse, that we may make vnto our selues of afflictions, that they serue vs as wandes, to driue out

the

the dust that is in our clothing, and make vs leaue our sinnes, and returne to God.

Deut.30 After a vehement cõmination of many grieuous iudgements ripped vp, and denounced by *Moses* against the Israelits: hee inferreth this clause as the sequel of them, that they shall turne into their *harte*, and by them learne to looke into their sinnes, and returne vnto the Lord. Answerable wherunto is this saying of *Osea*. *Come let vs returne vnto the* Osea.6 *Lorde, for hee hath spoyled vs, and he will heale vs.* *Ezechiel* singeth the selfe same song when as hee sayth, Calamitie shall come vpon calamitie, I will Ezech.7 doe then according to their wayes. The Prophet *Ieremie* telleth the Israelites, that howsoeuer at that Iere.2 time they turned their backes, and not their faces, yet in the time of trouble they should bee altered, and should say vnto God arise and help vs. To this ende *Dauid* thus powreth out his spirit, and prayeth vnto God, *Make their faces ashamed O Lord,* Psal.83 *that they may know thy name.* *Mala en m quæ nos premunt ad deum ire compellunt*, saith that learned *Gregorie*: Afflictions which do presse vs do compell vs to return to God. The Israelits being vexed 1.King.18 with a most grieuous famine in the time of *Elias*, were reclaimed from their wickednes, and called 2.Chron.26 home to God. King *Manasseh* afflicted with miserie and iron, deuoutlie and zealouslie gaue himselfe to praier. *Iohn* the *Baptist*, by thundering out Luc.3 the iudgements of God against Sadduces and sinners, wrought their conuersion. If the prodigall sonne had not beene afflicted, but might haue liued

liued at libertie & pleasure abroad, we should not haue heard of his comming home. But it was affliction, that was his best instruction, and wrought his conuersion.

If we surueay the causes why God afflicteth vs, we shall learne much patience: troubles shall not come vnto vs as Iaylers vnto prisoners, but we shal indure them with a quiet minde: for there is a manifold vse that commeth of them. The causes for which god sendeth afflictions.

First they serue notablie to curble our proude mindes, and to tame the wanton lusts of the flesh, which in our prosperitie is ouermuch pregnant, insulting and preuayling ouer the motions of the spirite.

When as *Peter* was commended by his Maister Christ, for his good confession, hee was so perte and proude of this prayse, as hee presumed afterwarde most malapertlie to gainesay him. *Matt.*16

The spouse in the Canticles, being commended by her bridegroome for her suspassing beautie, in comelines resembling the tents of Kedar, and the Curtaines of *Salomon*, grew thereby so audacious, as shee talked and communed so familiarlie with him, as one friend with another, putting forth questions, asking him where he fed, and where he did lay at noone. *Cant.*1

Zebedeus his two sonnes, because they were so happie, as by fleshlie consanguinitie to bee allyed to Christ, they presentlie were so bolde, as to clayme a prerogatiue and libertie by it, to chalenge *Matt.*20

chalenge the left hande, and right hand in his kingdome.

Wherefore becauſe worldly fauour and proſperitie, do ſo puffe vs vp with pride as wee forget our ſelues: it is exceeding good that we fall into temptations, which are good ſchoolmaiſters to traine vs vp in the knowledge of our ſelues.

A ſimilitude

The maiſter that hath a ſeruant lying ſicke, if hee ſeeth that wine is hurtfull for him, giueth commandement to alay it with water, which may abate the heat, & operation of the wine: ſo God our good maiſter, ſeeing vs his ſeruants to be very ſicke of ſinne, and perceiuing that the wine of worldlie proſperitie is poyſonable vnto vs, hee ſlacketh the power and hurtfull effect of it, by mixing the water of tribulation with it.

A ſimilitude

That Gentleman that hath a Hawke of great account, will vouchſafe the paines, himſelfe in attending and dieting him, hee will coy and ſtroke him with his owne hand, and ſmooth his feathers, and taketh great delight in the often looking on him: but as he doth thus, ſo he likewiſe hoodeth him, & faſt tyeth him by the feete vnto the Pearch. If this ſeemeth ſtrange to him that hath no skill, & is not acquainted with the reaſon of it, but ſhall firſt demaund why he tendeth and tendereth him ſo much? Anſwere will be made, becauſe hee ſo loueth him: If further it be asked, why then he hoodeth, tyeth and fettereth him? it will be anſwered, leaſt the Hawke which he ſo loueth ſhould eſcape and flie from him; ſo the Lorde dealeth with his beloued

beloued people hee feedeth and cockereth vs, because we are his darlinges, and hee greatly loueth vs: but hee hoodeth vs, and bindeth vs therewithall vnto aduersitie, because wee should not depart away from him, roauing and scouting after our owne libertie.

Thus heedfullie did he tende and looke vnto *Dauid*, as any man can looke vnto his hawke, prosecuting and following him with fauour vpon fauour, calling him from a shepheard to the gouernment of a kingdome, putting a new heart into him, and indewing him with the spirit of prophecie in verie ample measure, in giuing him a famous field against *Goliah*, & so renowning him by the slaughter of the Philistins: as his name grewe most glorious, and hee became the staffe and subiect of the ditrie of the damsels of *Israel*, who playing vppon their pipes and musicall instruments, sung with one consent, and with sweet concent, *Saul hath slaine his thousand, but Dauid his tenne thousand*. These things God did for him, because hee so loued him. But least hee should bee too proude by them, the Lord hooded him, and tied him to the pearch, in stirring vp *Saul* to be his persecutor, by whose persecutions he was so insnared and surelie tied, as he could not flie away, for the verie snares of death did ouercome him, and the paines of hel it selfe did ouertake him. 1. *Sam.* 16. 17

Ioseph was his fathers onelie birde, God made him not onlie gracious in the eyes of his father, but also amiable and delightfull to his mistresse: nowe

leaſt this culling him ſhoulde bee a meane as it were to kill him, as by hurting his ſoule, and alluring him from God, hee was ſolde from his father by his brethren into Egypt, and was quite caſt out of fauour by his miſtreſſe, and hy his maiſter faſt bound in the priſon, as a hawk vnto the pearch.

Gen. 27
Gen. 29

The Lord was euer louing to *Elias*, and hee vſed familiarly to talke with him, as a father with his ſonne, or one friend with an other: now leaſt he ſhould be ouermuch conceited with this abundant kindnes, and be too fond vpon this fauor, the Lord mixed trouble with proſperitie, and ſent *Iezabel* to perſecute him.

1. King. 19

Ezechiel was mightily inſpired with the ſpirit, and had manie reuelations, but that theſe ſhould not make him dote vpon himſelfe, and to eſteeme too highlie of himſelfe, hee heard this voyce alwayes ſounding in his eare, *Sonne of man*, that for all this fauour and loue of God, he ſhould knowe himſelfe, that hee is but man. *Paul* had a liuelie feeling hereof, as hee himſelfe acknowledgeth: for leaſt the abundance of Reuelations ſhoulde extoll him, the Angell of Sathan was ſent vnto him to buffet and humble him. Afflictions therefore ſerue verie well to tame and keepe vnder our ſinfull affections.

Ezech. 2

2. Cor. 12

Secondlie, God ſendeth afflictions to his Saints, that not being burthened with earthlie proſperitie, wee might goe the lighter and ſpeedyer vnto God, and flie as it were a birde vnto the hill,

It

It so often happeneth to wayfayring men, that espying in their trauelling a delightfull greene hill, they take occasion to slacke their iourney, to goe out of the way, to sit downe and rest themselues vpon that hill. Wherefore to preuent and cut off such occasions of lingring and loytring whilest we are in this life, which is as it were our way, hee taketh away from vs all vaine shewes of pleasures, that not beeing miscarried with the vanitie of such flowers, which adorne this greene hill, we might still goe forwarde, and make more haste to heauen. A similitude

As God permitted *Pharaoh* to afflict the Israelits, that they might haue a longing of their departure from Egypt, and loue the land of Canaan: so God would haue vs his children to be afflicted, that wee might desire to depart frō the Egyptian bondage of our sinne, and couet our spiritual inheritance, and Canaan in the kingdome of heauen. Exod. 1

If a man that trauelleth into a farre land, maie there obtaine his hearts desire, and liue as him listeth, he wil not much desire to returne to his own Countrie, to liue in aduersitie. For *Iacob* was willing inough to soiorne with *Laban*, so long as *Laban* well entreated him: but when he was vnciuilly demeaned, and his face was not towarde him as it was before, he forthwith resolued vpon his departure, and acquainted *Rachell* with it.

Thirdly, God exerciseth his seruants with afflictions, to terrifie them from sinne, and therby to giue them knowledge of his hatred of sinne. For albeit

that God remitteth some mens sinnes without afflicting them for their sinnes, as the theefes vpon the Crosse, whose sinne and punishment hee remitted, saying: *This day shalt thy soule bee with mee in Paradise*: As the Publicans who vpon his submisse sute for mercie for his sinne, without further iudgement went out of the temple iustified and releated, and absolued of his sinne: and as *Peters* lewd abiuration of the faith, and deniall of his maister without further processe of iustice, according to the desert of his enormous sinne, vpon his repentance was discharged of his sinne, receiued into grace, and restored againe vnto his office of Apostleship: *Lachrimas Petri lego satisfactiones non lego*, saith S. *Ambrose*. I reade of *Peters* teares, but *I* reade not of *Peters* satisfaction for his sinnes. And finallie as the Palsie mans whose sinnes hee forgaue him, as soone as hee sawe him, without inioyning anie other thing vnto him: yet commonlie it is Gods course with afflictions and rebukes to punish men for sinne: and therefore for the most parte, iudgement doth begin at the Lords house, that the vilde man and sinner maie tremble before him.

Luke 23
Luke 18
Luke 23
Matt. 9

Fourthlie, God suffreth vs to bee afflicted here, that we may be happy elsewhere, to bee crucified with Christ in this world, to be glorified with him in the world to come. So that ỹ troubles of this life ground vs in the hope of another life, of the general resurrection, and iust retribution that therein shalbe giuen according to our deedes, either good or euill

It agreeth with Gods iustice to punish sinners, and to be mercifull to his seruants: nowe because his seruants are heere punished, and his enemies comforted, there must be an inuersion & exchange of times, that they may be succoured, and the other tormented, and this is at the generall day of reckning, and after our death vpon the departure of the soule out of the bodie, which immediatly goeth to heauen or to hell, at what time is fulfilled the saying of *Abraham* to the rich glutton. *Sonne remember that thou in thy life time diddest inioy thy pleasure, and Lazarus paine: but now is he comforted, and thou art tormented.* Luk. 16

Fifdly, God afflicteth vs to make vs conformable to the image of his sonne, who suffred al afflictions. If our good maister hath suffred such sorrowes for vs euill seruants, why should not wee reciprocallie endure sorrowes for so good a maister?

He is a cowardly and dastardly soldior, who seeing his captaine to bee wounded and slaine in the field before his face, will not stand to it & abide the triall, and take such part as the captain doth before him. We haue Christ his name, and are called Christians, because that we should liue as Christ did. If thy bridegroome *Isaac* commeth out a foote, thou must imitate *Rebecca*, & come down frō thy cammel, & go a foot with him. Christ walked here in al aduersitie and contempt, and hatred of the world, and wilt thou be mounted on thy stately stead, and labor to aspire to the top of al prosperitie, & yet be a Christian? It cannot so be, come down & walke A similitude

as Christ hath appointed you to walke, and suffer afflictions as the deare sons of God, as the sonne of God did. Thus haue we a manifolde vse of afflictions: God giue vs grace to make this vse of them.

The fift Chapter.

Of the prodigall son his confession of his sins, a most necessarie effect of our true repentance.

THe prodigall sonne hath hitherto bin occupied about zealous meditations, but whilest he mused, the fire kindled, and now at the last hee speaketh with his tongue. Bethinking himselfe how he might pacifie his father: hee thinketh it expedient, and not without good iudgement to beginne his satisfaction, with a dutifull confession. *Giue glorie to God my sonne*, sayth *Iosua* vnto *Achan*, when as he perswaded him to confesse his sinne, insinuating thereby, that God is greatlie glorified by the confession of out sinnes. Iosue. 7

Hee that will not confesse his sinnes before God, argueth great pride and boldnesse of minde, and that he sorroweth or careth little for them. It is a requisite and most needfull dutie, and the saints of God commonlie do vse it.

It was *Dauids* chiefe comfort when the hand of God was verie heauie on him, and hee had a fierce combate with many strong temptations. For whilest he dolefully displaieth them vnto vs, ripping

ping them vp by their seuerall circumstances after this maner: *My bones consumed away through my dayly complaining, for thy hand is heauie vpon mee day and night, and my moysture is like the drought in Summer,* He ranne vnto this as vnto his last refuge, saying in this wise: *I will knowledge my sinne vnto thee, and mine vnrighteousnes haue I not hid. I said I will confesse my sinnes vnto the Lord, and so thou forgauest the wickednes of my sinne.* Psal. 32

In many of his Odes and heauenly Hymnes, the kingly harper harpeth vppon this note: but most tunable, and melodiously in the fiftie one Psalme, hee trebbleth and quauereth and capereth vpon it. *I knowledge my sinne, and my sinne is euer before mee. Against thee onelie haue I sinned, and done this euill in thy sight, that thou mightest be iustified in thy saying, and cleere when thou art iudged. Beholde, I was shapen in wickednesse, and in sinne hath my mother conceyued me.* Psal. 51

Daniel did the like, and the briefe and forme of his confession is this, *We haue sinned, wee haue done wickedlie.* *Esdras* and *Nehemias* made such confessions openlie for the people. And wee are taught the like in that copie of prayer which is set vs by Christ, when as we acknowledge our selues to bee debters, and doe pray vnto God that hee woulde pardon and forgiue vs our trespasses. Saint *Iohn* commendeth this dutie vnto vs, in the first of his Canonicall, when as hee sayeth: *If wee confesse our sinnes, he is faythfull and iust to forgiue vs our sinnes.* Dan. 9 Esdr. 9 Nehem. 1 Matt. 6 1. Ioh. 1

Leuit. 16 Confeſsion of ſinnes was Gods own ordinance, inſtituted by him in the old church, and commanded to be ſolemnlie obſerued & celebrated before the face of the church, by the prieſt, at the feaſt of Purification, the prieſt laying his handes vppon a Goate, and publiquely confeſsing the ſinnes of the people.

By this wee muſt haue acceſſe vnto God, and this is the doore by which we muſt enter into fauor with him. We muſt not dote vpon our own merits, and righteouſneſſe, which is nothing, if we will bee ſuters and ſpeeders in our ſutes but we muſt come as poore men with praier, and ſubmiſsion.

ſimilitude He is a fond fellow, who ſitting by the way ſide to beg the deuotions of people paſsing by, ſheweth them his golde, and boaſteth himſelfe of his wealth and ſubſtaunce. This is not the meane to moue affections, or to tolle on a people to chargeable contributions. Beggars doe vſually ſpeake of their wantes, acknowledge their neceſsities, and preſent their woundes and ſwelling ſoares to the view of paſſengers, to ſtir vp compaſsion. If we wil find fauour before the Lorde, and woulde haue his eye to pittie vs, brag wee not of our demerits, but bemoane wee our miſeries, let vs not bee in the ruffe, but ſhewe we him our nakednеſſe that hee might cloath vs, our weakeneſſe, ſickneſſe, and pouertie, that hee might ſtrengthen, heale, and make vs rich.

nilitude That diſeaſed patient who is in that caſe, as when he is ſtroken in a vaine by the Chirurgian, he

retaineth

retaineth still the corrupt and grosse bloud, but looseth that which is pure and cleane, cannot but faint, and fall vnder his hand, but hee that doth the contrary recouereth himselfe, and obtaineth health thereby: so a sinner that concealeth and keepeth in his sinnes, as it were his grosse bloud, and publisheth and proclaimeth his good workes, and suffereth them as the purer bloud to spin and issue from him, his health is desperate, and cannot be recouered: but of the other side, he that letteth out this infected substance, and purgeth himselfe thereof in al lowlinesse of minde, by a godlie confession of his misdeedes before God his heauenly Chirurgian, and concealeth and keepeth close his inwarde vertues and good graces of God as most holesome bloud which God hath giuen vnto him, he shall do very wel, & shal be perfectly restored to his health, and shall liue for euer.

It is the nature of the wicked, to paint out their praises, and to spread abroad their good deedes among men. So did the Sydonian king *Balaake* very boldly, when he boasted vnto *Balaam* of his altars which he had made, as if God were purblind, and saw not wel enough what a feate he had done, when as not only the nature of euerie worke, but also all circumstances thereunto belonging, are weil knowne to him. For when Christ was at table at the Pharisie his house he not only obserued *Marie Magdalens* action, but also roundly rebuked *Simon*, by rehearsing vp the specialties of hir zealous deuotion. Num 23

He

Similitude

He that commeth to a Phiſitian to be cured, and hideth from him his diſeaſed parts,& will not make him acquainted with his griefes, how can hee haue remedy of thē at his hands? if we will be eaſed we muſt complaine, if we will haue a ſalue let vs ſhewe our ſoare, let confeſsion goe before, that remiſsion may follow after. Vaineglorious and fooliſh men, who do ſet a good dye vpon a bad cloath, & make as it were a flouriſh before the field, dilating their deedes, extending and ſtretching them, as if they were parchment skins vpon the tenters, they be like vnto Hennes, who no ſooner laie an egge, but they cackle ſo lowde as all the houſe may know it. The Pehen is a wiſer foule in her kinde, for ſhee hideth her egges, becauſe ſhe knoweth that the Pecocke ſeeketh them, who will ſucke them if hee findeth them. Let vs be ſo wiſe in our generation, as to hide ſuch good things as God ſuffereth vs to bring forth, for there is a proude Pecocke, euen our enemy the diuel that ſeeketh to deſtroy them.

Similitude

Similitude

Similitude

Hee that trauaileth by the way, and carieth much money with him, commonlie hath two purſes, hee hideth one of them in the which hee hath moſt, and that hee muſt drawe out vppon euerie occaſion, hath no more then is needefull to defray expences, whereby he is ſure that if he lighteth vppon theeues by the way, hee looſeth but a little. This care ſhould we haue if we would not be robbed of ſuch his good bleſsinges which our good God hath giuen vs.

God called *Ezechiel* and ſaid vnto him. *Sonne*

of

of man, dig now in the wall. And when I had digged in the wall, beholde there was a doore. And hee saide vnto me, goe in, and beholde the wicked abhominations that they doe heere. So I wente in, and sawe and beholde there was euerie similitude of creeping thinges, and abhominable beastes, and all the Idolles of the house of Israell painted vppon the wall round about. So, O thou sinnefull soule, God speaketh vnto thee, breake a doore thorough the stonie wall of thy conscience, and enter into thy heart, see and confesse what filthinesse is there hid, thou shalt finde there similitudes of creeping thinges, and abhominable beastes, euen beastlie and vilde affections, and all kindes of sinnes depainted in this wal of thy soule and conscience, couetonsneſſe, pride, vngodly lusts, & when thou hast named all the sins thou canst, yet thou shalt cry out with the Prophet and say, *and yet beholde more abhominations then these.*

Moses his hand seemed to bee sound, but when he did put it into his bosome, it was full of leprosie: our deedes which are the effects of the hand, seeme to vs sounde, but put wee our handes awhile into our bosome, lay we them vpon our harts and consciences, out alas, how are they polluted with a spirituall leprosie. Exod. 4

Sinners may very wel be said, to beare the image of creeping beastes, which *Ezechiel* did see thorough the dore of the wall, according to that which the Apostle saith in his letter to the *Romans*. *They turned the glory of the incorruptible God, to the similitude* Rom. 1

militude of the image of a corruptible man, and of
Rom. 1 *birdes, and of foure footed beastes, and of creeping things.* And this much was signified in the olde law, wherein it was enacted, that no kind of beast should bee offered vnto God, which did not ruminate and chew the cud.

Leuit. 11 It may be thou wilt say, that if thou couldest call thy sinnes to thy remembrance, thou wouldest willingly confesse them; but now because thou hast forgotten them long since, thou thinkst thou canst not do it. Say not so, but meditate a while and go apart, and shut vp thy selfe in a priuate place, and by contemplation, and studious meditation, they wil come to thy remembrance.

A similitude When thou hast beene long abroad in the open ayre, and commest into thy chamber, it seemeth at the first, because the glimmering sunne hath dazeled thine eyes, to be very obscure, and darke vnto thee; but after thou hast continued a while therin, all things appeare cleere and bright enough vnto thee: so when thou considerest with thy selfe of thy sinnes, and commest home, hauing before bin abroad wādring after thine own wil, at the first sight thou wilt not know thy selfe, the sunne shine of this vaine and transitory world, hath so dimmed and almost blinded the eies of thy minde, as thy sins will seeme strange and obscure vnto thee: but doubtles after thou hast paused a while, and muzed thereupon, thou shalt haue enough come into thy memory thou shalt haue a sufficient subiect of confession giuen thee to worke vppon.

Wherefore

Wherefore put thou this duty in practise, as it becommeth a good Christian, for it will make exceedingly for thy good. For those euils which thou hast doone shall bee turned into thy good, by thy faithfulnesse herein: Euen as a Bee from soure and bitter flowers, draweth and gathereth most sweet and pleasant hony: so by the rehearsall of thy sowre sinnes thou shalt finde Gods heauenly comfort, to sweeten thy soule. A similitude

Thou hast not gone further then the Prodigall sonne, for hee went very far, he wasted all hee had long before his returne, yet his confession wanted not a blessing, for hee was receiued and renewed againe, and restored by his father to his former happinesse. Thou maiest haue the like, if thou wilt doe the like. Repentance and a godlie confession of our sinnes commeth neuer too late with God.

As hee that falleth by chance into a riuer vp to the middle, yea vp to the chin, may for al that liue: but if so be his mouth be stopped with water, and the water couereth him ouer the eares and ouerwhelmeth him, hee presently perisheth and sinketh like a stone: so though we be deeply plunged in sinne, yet may we get out and doe well enough, by holding vp our heads, and opening our mouthes confessing our sinnes: but if the streames run ouer vs, and our mouthes be shut vp, and we bee choaked with the water, then must we needes drowne, we cannot escape destruction. Wherefore *Dauid* said. I *opened my mouth and did draw in my spirit.* A similitud Psal. 11

So

So open thou thy mouth wide in a true and liuely faith, and thou ſhalt be ſaued, thou canſt not poſsiblie periſh, for thy ſinnes which thou nowe ſeeſt, when as thou confeſſeſt them thou ſhalt neuer ſee more, for God ſhall drown them in the bottom of the ſea, euen as the Iſraelites were tolde by God, that the Egyptian enemies which they did ſee now they ſhould ſee no more, for God would drowne them in the water of the red ſea.

Exod. 14

The diuell cannot doe vs a greater miſchiefe then to ſtop our mouthes, and therfore he keepeth vs, as much as he can frō opening our mouthes to confeſſe our ſinnes. Wherein he imitateth the condition of the Wolfe, who whenſoeuer he falleth vpon a ſheepe, he firſt of all laieth ſure hold vppon his throat, that ſo thereby vnable to bleate, the ſhepheard might not heare his noiſe, and come out, and reskew him.

A Similitude

Wherefore that thou maieſt eſcape the pawe of this Wolfe and the mouth of this beaſt, call vppon the heauenly ſhepheard of thy ſoule, that hee may preſerue thee, and confeſſe thy ſinnes vnto him that he may forgiue them. It is a common ſpeech, and ſaying among men: Confeſſe, and be hangd, which is true in our confeſsion of our capitall crimes before ciuill magiſtrates, but it is contrarie with God, for if we confeſſe our ſinnes vnto him: *He is faithfull and iuſt to forgiue vs our ſinnes, and the bloud of Ieſus Chriſt his ſonne clenſeth vs from all ſinne.*

1. Ioh. 1

The

The sixt Chapter.

The prodigall sonne his forme of his confession of his sinnes.

THis prodigall sonne absolutely resoluing with himselfe to confesse his sins, hee before prouideth and prepareth himselfe for it. He thinketh it not meet presumptuously to prease into his fathers presence, and without mature and ripe deliberation, to exhibit vp vnto him his needefull supplication. Hee giueth vs to knowe that hee intendeth it seriously, and therefore he addresseth himselfe vnto it aduisedlie. Therefore he ruminateth, and meditateth before of a set forme of speech that hee will vtter after. Of the benefit of meditation.

This his course is very cómendable, and ought diligently to be followed. For what steward that is wise will not before he giue vp his accounts, first bethinke himselfe of the particular summes which he hath laide out, and draw a formall bill, or at the least conceiue in his minde what aunswere hee wil make when he commeth to his Lorde touching all his demandes, before he bee cited and summoned to his audit, and called vpon by his Lord to giue vp his reckoning. A similitude

An aduocate, proctor, or counsailor at the lawe studieth before hee commeth to the bar to pleade his clientes cause vppon such cases and pointes of A similitud

law, as may perſwade his purpoſe, and enforce his action.

I ſuppoſe there appertaine as many bookes, and as great ſtudy, and as much conſcience to bee vſed of vs in ſpirituall exerciſes, that we be not vnprouided before the high God, when we appeare at his tribunall, but that wee before like to good ſtewards make our bils perfect, and like good wiſe lawyers conſider of ſuch matters whereupon wee are to ſpeake, that wee may ſay with holie *Dauid*, *My heart is prepared, my heart is prepared. I will ſing and giue praiſe.*

Whatſoeuer thing is done without premeditation is prepoſterous and abſurde. Bee not too raſh in any thing thou doeſt, but aduiſe thee well before, and ponder what thou doeſt. The bleſſed virgine when ſhee was greeted by the Angell, before ſhe anſwered it ſhe conſidered vppon it: the text ſaith *that ſhe pondered with her ſelfe what kind of ſalutation it ſhould be.* This her action anſwereth very well this Canon of the Apoſtle. *Beleeue not euerie ſpirit, but trie the ſpirits, whether they bee of God or no.* When the Scribes & Phariſies brought to Chriſt the woman that was taken in adulterie, and asked his opinion and iudgement of the caſe, hee demured vppon the matter, and ſuſpended his ſentence, ſtooping downe, and with his finger writing vppon the grounde: teaching vs thereby this wiſdome, to ſet a watch before our actions, and firſt of all to write them with the finger of diſcretion, before we do attempt them. *Mary Magdalen.*

who

who would rashlie haue touched Christ vppon his resurrection was rebuked by him: as wee shall surelie bee who shall rashlie and vnpreparedly attempt heauenlie matters. Wherefore take we heed how we walke circumspectlie, not as vnwise, but as wise, redeeming the time because the daies are euill.

As meate of it selfe, though it bee neuer so good, requireth his ordinary and fit seasoning, that it may be more holesome and pleasurable to the stomacke: so must euerie good action bee seasoned with his salt, sprinkled and powdered with reason and iudgement, that it may be acceptable and delightful vnto God, & therfore before thou speakest vnto God, determine before with the Prodigall sonne what thou wilt saie vnto him. But let vs examine his formal confession, which is short, but substantiall, ful of spirit and life, and matters of much moment. A similitude

Firſt he only mentioneth his father, to whom he will flee vnto, and vnfolde his sinnes. Hee will acquainte no friende or neighbour of his father, with his defectes and wants: but hee will go to the fountaine at the first, to God his onely comforte, and helpe of his complaint. And herein hee is the wiser. For as he is vnwise who seeketh health, and helpe at his handes, who neither is endewed with learning to counsaile him, or furnished with medicines and meanes to recouer him: so are they not onely foolish, but of all most miserable, who in the most dãgerous diseases of their soules, repaire vnto Our sins are to be cõfessed to God only. Against the auricular confessiõ of the papists. A similitude

ſuch dogleeches & paultrie peſants, who haue neither wit to counſaile, or grace to comfort thē. To what ende therefore is that beggarlie rudiment of auricular confeſsion? Our running vnto monkes & ſacrificing ſhauelings, whiſpering in their eares and confeſsing our ſinnes to them? an idle ceremonie, an inuention of mans braine, founded as it is ſuppoſed by Pope *Innocent* the thirde, or as *Sozomen* imagineth, ordained by Biſhops, eſpecially by ẏ biſhops of the weſt parts. There is no precept and warrant for it in the holy ſcriptures, albeit to make them ſerue their lewde fancies, they diueliſhlie depraue manie places of the ſcriptures. But theſe Balaamites wounde themſelues with their owne Launcers, and wee will cut off the heade of *Goliah* of Gath as *Dauid* did with his owne ſworde.

lib. 6. ca. 16.

The argumēts of the papiſts for auricular confeſſion propoūded & diſſolued.

A chiefe reaſon which they alledge to make their matter good, is an ancient lawe prouided by God for leprous perſons, who are willed by God to reſort vnto ẏ prieſt, appointed by God to be a iudge of their diſeaſe. They diſpute in this wiſe. Leproſy is to bee ſhewed vnto the prieſt, and leapers by the law were to go vnto the prieſt, & ſo Chriſt cōmanded the Leper in the goſpel: but ſinne is leaproſie, and euerie ſinner is a ſpirituall Leper: Wherefore euerie ſinne is to be ſhewed vnto the prieſt, and euerie ſinner muſt confeſſe vnto the prieſt, This argument hangs together like a ſicke mans dreame, and concludeth nothing. I meruaile by this argument, why the popiſh prieſtes doe not drawe to themſelues

1. Argument *Matth. 8*

themselues all contagious and leprous persons, since this outward leprosie must bee iudged of by the priest? If they stand so much vpon it, I could wish, that all noisome and plaguy persons might croud vnto them as beggars to a dole, to shew their botches, carbuncles, and biles, that they might iudge of them. But this leprosie they will saie is meerelie allegoricall, it signifieth the spirituall leprosie of sinne: Then we answere, that the reason is constrained, there is no certaine sense and meaning in an allegory, for allegories may be wrested, and wroung to and fro, and be diuerslie vnderstoode. We aunswere more fullie, that the olde Leuiticall priesthoode is altered, it is wholie translated to Christ our high priest, to whome nowe alone wee must confesse our sinnes. That lawe was ciuill, and serued for those times, it is nowe repealed, and is no more in force. Christ willed the leper to goe vnto the priest, according to the lawe, because as yet *Moses* his lawe was in force, and our Sauiour Christ came to bee obedient vnto it, as hee himselfe witnesseth, and not to breake it. *Mat.5*

2. Argumen

Another reason which carieth some countenance and credit with it, in outwarde appearance, is formed in this wise. They came to *Iohn* the Baptist, and confessed their sinnes, wherefore in the like sort we must come vnto the priest, and confesse our sinnes. *Matth.3*

Here we desire more wit of them, for their logicke faileth them. We yeeld, that the confession of

sinnes is necessarie, and it is no maruaile that the people did confesse them whē they came to *Iohn*: for *Iohn* then baptized, and they came vnto his baptisme. Now baptisme is the signe, and token of repentance, and confession of sinnes is a branch of this Tree, and a member of repentaunce. But all this while this their repentaunce and confession of their sinnes, fauoureth not as I can see their auricular confession. For they confessed their sinnes publikelie, they came not creeping vnto *Iohn* the Baptist, and tolde him priuatelie of them in his eare. This all the dunsicall Sorboniستes cannot proue, without which we plainelie see, that they delude and mock vs, and do proue nothing.

3 Arg. *Acts.19*

An other place of Scripture which is taken from the nineteene Chapter of the Actes, and the eighteene verse, of the Ephesians, who confessed and shewed their works, hath the selfe same aunswere with the former, and one thorne stoppeth well these two gappes, their confession there, was publique, it was not priuate, in the priests eare.

4 arg. *Iacob.5*

And truly the saying of the Apostle *Iames*, *acknowledge your faults one to another*, doth them as little pleasure as the former testimonies: for the Apostle speaketh of mutuall offences, betweene neighbour and neighbour, and of mutuall reconcilement to be made betweene them, by their mutuall acknowledgement of them. The priest standeth bound by the tenour of these wordes, to confesse

fesse his own sins, in the peoples eares, aswell as the people are in the priests eares.

They dote very much vppon this aphorisme of *Salomon* & are much cõceited in it. *He that hideth his sins shall not prosper: but he that confesseth thē, and forsaketh them shall haue mercie.* But this argument is most weake, it hath no iointes or sinewes in it. It wholie respecteth the confession of our sins before almightie God, and not the confession of them to the world, and least of all the auricular papisticall confession. 5. Arg. Pro. 28. 13

I might heape vp infinite beggerlie and doltish reasons, but the more we stir a dunghill, the more it stinketh, & therfore I will not infect your godlie sences with them. God saith by the mouth of his Prophet *Esay. I am he, and besides me there is none that putteth away thine iniquities and thy sinnes.* Therefore to whome shoulde wee confesse our sinnes, but onelie to him who can forgiue vs our sinnes? Esai. 43. 11. & 25.

The prodigall son in this his forme of confession, hath a verie good Methode, and his wordes are verie sutable, and fall out fitlie into his purpose.

He rather chooseth to call him father, then his Lord or maister, albeit he is both, and all in all vnto him. For hereby he hath boldnesse, and accesse vnto his presence. Why the prodigal son calleth him father rather then Lord and maister.

A sonne without offence may aske more of his father, then a seruant of his maister. The name of a father is an inticing name, it setteth wide open the

euerlasting gates of mercie, for euery prodigall re-
Matt.6 pentant sonne, at all times to enter in. Wherefore Christ in his formall praier, prescribed vnto vs, maketh an entrance thereunto with this title, and prefixeth in the forefront, to giue grace to such petitions preferred afterwardes, the sweete name of Father.

Iohn.8 The Iewes vaunted and boasted exceedinglie that they had *Abraham* to their father, how ought we much more to reioice and be glad, hauing God
Rom.8 to be our father? For if we are sonnes, wee are also heires, for that is *Pauls* conclusion. Wee can want
Matt.6 nothing, *For our heauenly father knoweth whereof*
Ioh.16 *we stand in need*: and our heauenly father loueth vs as Christ himselfe saith.

Therefore because this title was so encouraging, and so full life, it was with good reason that this comfortlesse and almost dead person, did take holde of this as the Citie of refuge, and hornes of the altar, by which he might be sure to escape further vengeance, and the handes of the destroier.

Secondly, this title graced him verie much and did set forth his dignitie; He descended of great parentage, howsoeuer now he was abiect & forelorn, and being well brought vp, he could not so put off all behauiour, as vtterly to forget what tearmes to vse, & of what parents he did come. In the like manner, it maketh much to our honor and renown, that we haue God to be our father, for this is ỹ couenãt and prerogatiue royal of the newe Testament that

he

he wil be our father, and we shal be his children; we cannot haue a greater blessing and happines, then to haue such a father.

Thirdly, it could not be, but that the memory of his father did put him in mind of the duty of a son, for it serueth effectually to that end. It is a foule disgrace to them of noble parentage, to consort themselues basely with nasty and vild companions. Is it not intolerable that a kinges sonne should disport himselfe openly in the streetes, and highwaies with euery sorded beggar, filthilie, and shamefullie to nusle among swine, and to grouel and wallowe in the dirte, and in the myre? This was the condition of this young mans life, of this peereless prince of the higheſt descent, hauing God, the king of all kinges to be his father. And this is the course and order of our life, who are his brethren, and haue all of vs one Father, and are made his children by adoption and grace thorough faith in Christ Iesu. 3 A similitude

Wherefore let the blessed memorial of our newe birth, be most deer vnto vs, and let the name of our father be alwaies in our mindes, to teach vs our duties, that we may walke as deere children, beseeming such a father. 1. Sam. 10.

When as God changed the estate of *Sauls* life, hee changed his heart likewise, hee was no sooner king but a kingly heart was giuen him. God requireth newe hearts of his newe borne children: since that nowe we haue such a gracious father, we must not as before continue graceless children: Wee

A. Fuluius. read of *Aulus Fuluius* who eſpying his ſonne in his enemies campe, woulde haue ſlaine him with the ſword, ſaying vnto him, that hee had not begotten him for *Catiline*, but his Country: So God hath not begotten vs that we ſhoule ſerue his enemies, our brutiſh and ſwiniſh ſinnes, but that we ſhould be holie euen as he is holie, and remember our parentage.

Demades. *Demades* in times paſt, ſeeing *Philip* the king pleaſantly diſpoſed, laſciuiouſly and wantonly diſporting himſelfe with his priſoners and captiues, taken in the warres, vpbraiding them with their ſeruile and ſlauiſh condition, thus grauely and ſeuerelie cenſured his follie. Sithens (ſaieth hee) fortune and good lucke hath laide vppon thee the perſon of *Agamemnon*, that is of a triumphant and victorious king, maieſt thou not bee aſhamed to plaie the *Therſites*, that is the laſciuious and wanton companion? ſo inaſmuch, as not fortune and good lucke, but Gods good grace toward vs, hath giuen vs the dignitie to be the ſonnes of God, why liue wee in wantonneſſe and ſinnefull pleaſure? why do we followe vanity, and ſeeke after leaſing? God hath choſen to himſelfe the man that is godlie: if ſo bee, we bee his ſonnes, ſee that wee walke worthy of ſo great a calling, and let vs alwaies vſe with reuerence the name of our Father.

In the proceſſe of his ſpeech, he commeth to his ſinnes, which becauſe hee cannot account in particulars: hee thinketh it beſt, to reduce them to a groſſe

grosse, and to a generall summe, saying: I *haue sinned*. If he could haue recited them, it would haue made to long a discourse to haue made relation of euerie sinfull action, committed by him in euerie town and place, where soeuer he became since his first departure, but it had beene impossible for him to haue remembred them. *For who doth know* (saith *Dauid, how often he offendeth?* He therefore laieth them downe in a lump, by this one word *Peccaui*, I haue sinned, comprehending whatsoeuer sin hee had committed. He maketh no excuse, or apologie for himselfe, hee excuseth not himselfe, or accuseth others: not his merits but Gods mercie is the thing he standeth vpon: for simply and absolutely hee sayth, that he is a sinner. He accuseth not Sathan, who tempted him, his friends who forsooke him, or the Planets who brought this euill lucke vnto him, but condemneth himselfe: he imitateth *Nisus*, laying the whole burthen of the sinne vpon himselfe, to excuse his *Euryalus*, whom *Virgil* bringeth in speaking in this maner. Psal. 19

Me me adsum qui feci, in me conuertite ferrum
O Rutuli. mea fraus omnis, nihil iste nec ausus,
Nec potuit.

It is I, and none but *I*, that haue sinned. I crie with *Dauid Be mercifull vnto mee after thy great goodnes. For I knowledge my wickednes, and my sinne is alwayes before thee.* And I say with the poore Publican: *Lord be mercifull vnto me a sinner.* So let vs say, and not shift and put off our sinnes with excusing them, or extenuating them, or posting them Psa. 51 Luk. 18 Gene. 3

them to others, as *Adam* did to *Henah*, & *Henah* to the ſerpent, but take them vpon our ſelues.

He doth not onelie ſimplie confeſſe himſelfe a ſinner, but hee aggrauateth and enlargeth the grieuouſnes of his ſinnes, ſaying: *I haue ſinned againſt heauen, and before thee.* It was not nature but eſpeciall grace which ſuggeſted this vnto him. Fleſh and blood reuealed not this vnto him, but his heauenlie father. For if he would haue ſpoken as a naturall man, hee would haue ſpoken thus. Father I haue ſinned, but I wiſt not what I did, I had no euill intent and meaning when I ſinned, wherefore it is meete thou ſhouldeſt forgiue my ſinne, and let mee haue againe the libertie of a ſonne. Thus would a carnall man haue pleaded for himſelfe, whereby hee ſhould haue further damnified himſelfe. Hee taketh therefore a farre wiſer courſe, and by zealous pietie entreateth tender pittie. Let vs doe the like, and acknowledge our ſelues no meane and ordinarie offendors, but deſperate delinquents in the higheſt degree, ſinners againſt heauen.

Firſt, becauſe our ſinnes howſoeuer they ſeeme to vs to bee iniurious but to men, are deſigned agaynſt God, who hath flatlie forbidden them, and therefore directlie are committed agaynſt heauen.

Becauſe our ſinnes do call to heauen for vengeance, as the blood of *Abel*, the ſins of Sodome, the wickednes of Niniueh the great citie, & the wrath of God is reuealed from heauen againſt all vnrighteouſnes.

teousnes. Therfore we cannot whensoeuer we sin, but sinne against heauen.

Againe, inasmuch as sinne is against natures course which all creatures yeeld vnto, and which the heauens especiallie, and elements do obey, who keepe their proper motions, and haue their naturall influences: man sinneth agaynst them, and dooth them much wrong, who vsing their seruice by the prouidence of God, he alone beyonde al is disobedient vnto God. God made the heauens to serue for mans bodie, mans bodie for his soule, his soule for God. If the heauens doe serue thee, to the ende that thou shouldest serue the God of heauen, in sinning against God thou sinnest against heauen. To what ende serueth the whole structure of a clocke, if the Bell doath not sound at his due howers? The whole frame of heauen, and workemanship of the world, are the wheeles of the clock, the voice & obedience of man is the Bell that soundeth Gods praise, who disordereth & maketh void the whole frame of this clock, & do it great wrong and sinne against it, when as our Bell striketh not, and our obedience is wanting. 3 A similitud

Moreouer, by our sinne we abuse his heauenlie gifts, wast them, and consume them with this yonger brother: and therefore it may be fitlie said that we sinne against heauen. 4

Adde hereunto moreouer, that we sinne against heauen, because sinne is done in the sight of God who dwelleth in heauen. 5

Last of all, by esteeming more of earthlye 6

pleasures

pleasures then of heauenlie delights, by setting our loue more vpon the world then vpon heauen, wee sinne agaynst heauen. As he sinneth against thee who vildlie and basely accounteth of thee, or preferreth thy sonne or seruant before thee: so hee that preferreth childish seruile toyes before heauenlie true happinesse, and maketh more reckoning of the worlde then of heauen, as the Gergesites did of their swine before Christ, sinneth against heauen,

A similitude

Mat. 8

But he stayeth not here, but yet proceedeth further to a third degree, the more to enlarge and extend his misdeeds, by inferring this clause vpon the necke of the former, I *haue sinned before thee. Coram te in ipso penetrali interiore conscientiæ*, as *Augustine* sayeth, before thee in the straite Closet of my inward conscience. I haue done that euill before thee, which *I* durst not haue done before men. Oh father, I cared but a litle for thee, *I* should haue regarded and reuerenced thy presence, and that should haue kept me in awe and obedience, but thy Maiestie had no authoritie and power with mee. I liued loosely, and lewdlie, thou O father seeing it.

Augu. quæst: mang. quæst, 83

Here is a great exchange in this man. Whilest he was in his sinne, he flattered himself with this vaine conceite, that God did not see him, that hee sinned not before him: but turning from his sinne, he seeth and perceiueth that his sinne was in his sight. A sinner so liueth as if God had no eyes to see him, or eyeliddes to consider him, but when he shall return to a better mind he shall put off this foolishnes, and

acknowledge

acknowledge with himselfe that the Lord doth behold him, and that there is no sinne that can be hid from him. And if with this man we come to this good thought that God seeth our sinnes, it will teach vs more conscience, and restraine vs from such desperate and presumptuous sinnes, which so rifelie we commit, and mak vs walke more warily. Many a mã would not sin as he doth, if he thought that man did see him. Doe not theeues and fornicatours watch their priuate places to commit their villanies, where they thinke none doe see them? Doubtlesse then we would refraine sinne, if so bee this thought were rolling in our mindes, that the Lord doth see vs. We say with the carnall and lecherous Priests who assaulted chast *Susanna*. The Orcharde gate is shut, and no man can espie vs, *Dauids Naball* saith, The Lord doth not see it, & the God of *Iacob* doth not regard it. But ỹ spirite answereth him, and calleth him a foole, and cõfoundeth his foolishnes. *O thou foole, shal he that made the eye, not see? he that made the eare shall he not heare? hee that created the heart shall not hee vnderstand? The Lord knoweth the hearts of men to be but vaine.* For as the same Prophet speaketh in another place, The vngodlie man careth not for God, neither is God in all his thoughts: he flattereth himselfe in his wickednesse, vntill his abhominable wayes bee found out. God open our eyes that wee may see our selues, and our hearts, that we may knowe that wee stande before God, that wee sinne in his sight, who one day will call

Dan, 13

Psal, 64

Psal, 10

vs to account for the same, and lay before vs the things that we haue done.

The seuenth Chapter.

Of the prodigall sonne his extreame humilitie considered in the remainder of his formal cõfession, and of the commendation and vertue of humilitie.

THe reuerence and dutie which he resolutely determineth to render vnto his father when hee commeth in his presence is entire and admirable: for he humbleth and abaseth himselfe to the vttermost. Who is truly penitent and humble in soule if this man be not? He learneth vs our lesson, and prescribeth to vs all a pattern of a penitent and broken heart, which is acceptable vnto God. I am not (saith he) worthy to be called thy sonne, make mee one of thy hired seruants. Oh extreame humilitie, yet greatlie necessarie, because that god is gracious vnto such, but as for the proud he beholdeth them a farre off. And this the virgine *Marie* doth approue by experience finding it, and therefore she saith: *God resisteth the proude, and giueth grace to the humble. Inclinatur humilitas, hexcitatur misericordia.* Humilitie stoupeth, and mercie doth arise: *Dicit se filius indignum, vt ille eum iudicet dignum,* the sonne confesseth himselfe vnworthy, that his father may account him worthy.

luke.2

Aug. tom.9 e temp. Barbarico, cap. 7

He approcheth as *Dauid* through the multitude

Psal.5

of

of Gods mercies towards his holie temple.

He accounteth himselfe vnworthie to be called a sonne, as *Paul* did account himselfe vnworthie to be called an Apostle. 1.Cor.15

He speaketh as the Centurion did speake vnto Christ, Lord I am not worthie that thou shouldest enter vnder the roofe of my house. Mat.8

And as *Abraham* did to God, saying: *What is dust and ashes that I should speake vnto the Lord?* Gen.19

As the mother of the *Baptist* to the mother of Christ: *Whence commeth this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come vnto me?* Luke.1

As *Peter* did to Christ. *Depart from me, for I am a sinfull man.* Luke.5

And as *Abigael* vnto *Dauid*, when as *Dauid* would marrie her. *Behold thy seruant shall be as a handmaide to wash the feete of the seruants of my Lord.* 1.Sam.25

As if hee should haue sayd, I dare not, and *I* doe not make sute vnto thee to bee as I was before, and to bee taken for thy sonne. I am vnworthie of such fauour, I haue so disgraced my selfe, I haue beene so dislike thee that I cannot bee thy sonne, vouchsafe mee that mercie, that I maie belong vnto thee, that I maie haue a roome and seruice in thy house, among the companie of thy hyred seruants. I will not bee thy sonne, but Lorde make mee thy seruaunt. For better it is for mee to be a doore keeper in thy house, then to keepe swine abroade. Psal.85

One thing therefore doe I desire of thee, euen that I may dwel in thy house for euer. For there the swallow hath found her a nest, and the sparrow a place wherein to hide her selfe, euen thy altars ô Lord,

my

my king and my God.

Of this example let vs make a godlie vse, and let vs learne humilitie, it will auaile vs much: as it did this man. Enter (saith Christ) into the straite gate: which must bee by humilitie. For we cannot passe through a narrow gate, but by stowping low vnto it. And better it is to stoupe too much, then an inch too little, otherwise he may receiue a knocke, and be repelled backe.

Matt. 7

Our Sauiour Christ preached often of humilitie, becauſe it might be better learned of vs. Of whome did he make choice to be his followers, but humble and baſe fiſhermen? Whom hee ſo peremptorilie charged with this dutie, as he told them flatlie, that vnleſſe they were lowlie and humble like children, they ſhould not be ſaued.

Matt. 4

Matt. 18

Luk. 2

Christ by humilitie was exalted to all dignitie. When he was borne in a ſtable, and laide among beaſts, he was applauded, and glorified by Angels. When as hee was circumciſed the eight day, as a ſinner, he was then named Ieſus, which ſignifieth a Sauiour. When he was numbred among the wicked, and betweene two theeues crucified, the whole heauen was then obſcured, and the Sunne and Moone eclipſed, and hee was by his father by ſignes and woonders glorified, and by the Centurion ſtanding by and ſeeing them, publiquelie magnfied.

Matt. 27

A lowlie man without pride, is like an innocent Doue without gall.

ſimititude

A tree that is planted in the lower ground, is

ſimilitude

ſafer

safer then that which standeth higher vpon a lostie mountaine: for the windes and tempestes haue more power ouer it He that is the lesser is the greater (saith Christ:) The greater because his rewarde shall be greater: the greater because he is like vnto Christ who is greatest of all. As ashes do keep and preserue fire, so our humilitie whereby wee consider our selues to be but ashes, keepeth and cheerisheth the fire of the spirit. *Luk.* 14 A similitude

The deeper and lower that the pit is, the holesomer and sweeter the water of it is: so the lowlier and humbler thou art, the more delightfull and gracious art thou vnto God. A similitude

Thou canst neuer loose by thy godly humilitie, for it will extoll thee, and bring thee vnto dignitie.

Paul who in humilitie confessed himselfe to be the least of the Apostles, in labours through God who wrought mightilie with him, hee exceeded and surpassed all the rest of the Apostles. *1. Cor.* 15

The *Baptist* who thought so meanlie of himself, as hee thought his hande not woorthie to vntie Christes shooe, Christ vsed that hand to a higher office, and did put it to his heade, and was baptized of it. *Matt.* 3

The Centurion who adiudged himselfe vnworthie to receiue Christ into his house, Christ did commend him, and did preferre him aboue all the people of Israell. But Capernaum that looked proudly, and stared vp to heauen the Lord depressed, and threw it downe to hell. *Mat.* 8 *Matt.* 11

When Christ was to manifest his transfiguration *Matt.* 17

which made to his glorie, hee ſhewed it but to three: but when he was crucified which made to his contempt, he was ſeene of all, he would be lifted vppe and hanged in the ayre, that all the worlde might ſee him. It is not amiſſe to conceale ſuch things which maie tende vnto our praiſe, and to make them knowne to fewe; but it is to good purpoſe to publiſh our defectes, and manifeſt them vnto all.

Thou haſt no iuſt cauſe and argument of thy pride, but thou haſt matter inough to prouoke thee to be humble *Vide vnde veneris & erubeſce, vbi es & ingemiſce, quò vadis & contremiſce.* Looke from whence thou art and bee aſhamed, where thou art and be grieued, and whither thou ſhalt and be terrified. We ſee ſometimes a man in reſpect of his wit little wiſer then an Aſſe, and yet he ietteth and ruffleth in his ſilkes, and is adorned with his rings and coſtlie iewels, his outward burthen is better then himſelfe; and this man is proude becauſe of his riches, which an Aſſe might bee as well that is his ſumpter Iade, and carrieth vpon his backe more riches then his maiſter. The proudeſt vpon earth, when hee is buried in the earth, is as meane as the vildeſt here on earth. In Cheſſe play there are diuers degrees of perſons. There is the King, the Biſhop, the knight, & the rooke, and there is the abiect and paultrie pawne, theſe haue their differences and roomes by themſelues according to their degrees while the game laſteth, but they are all one when they are put into the bagge:

Bernard.

A ſimilitude

Death

Death maketh the begger & the King alike, all are one with him when he hath vs in his bagge. There are eares of corne in the time of harueſt to be ſeene in the fielde, that are higher then others, but when the Reapers cutte them downe, they are bounde vppe togither, and then this difference appeareth no more betweene them, for they are threſhed and beaten out togither. Let vs therefore laying aſide all pride, bee humble and meeke as it becommeth Chriſtians, and as Chriſt himſelfe by his owne example teacheth vs. A ſimilitude

The eight Chapter.

How God out of euill things bringeth forth good, as making the ſinnes of the prodigall ſonne the occaſion of his humble and dutifull confeſſion.

IF the prodigal ſonne had not beene ſo ſinful, he had not returned to his father ſo ſorowfull From the exceſſe of his iniquitie, did ſpring this his dutifull and conformable humilitie. This commendeth both the goodnes and wiſdom of God to vs, who can make our ſinnes redound to his praiſe, and from a matter ſo vilde can extort, and wring out ſuch a vertue from vs. Is not hee a wiſe workeman, who cannot onely skilfully graue in golde and ſiluer, and improone the purer ſubſtance, but alſo can make vſe and benefite of the droſſe, and can applie it to good ſeruice? It is ſo with God, who is this A ſimilitude

cunning craftsman, who not onelie engraueth in the hearts of his Saints, his refined metuall, the markes of his good grace: but also in prodigall and pernitious persons, such a one as this was, for a time the verie excrementes and scumme of all people, can woorke his owne will polishing and bringing them to so excellent an ende.

This fellowe was so deuoted and solde vnto sinne, as hee seemed whole to be turned into sinne, and to bee nothing but sinne. His siluer became drosse (as the Prophet *Esay* sayeth) and yet this goldsmith made a costlie vessell of it to serue in his tabernacle. *Esai.1*

God would not (as saint *Augustine* saith) suffer sinne to bee, but that he knoweth how to make a vertue of it, & to turne it vnto good: according vnto that which the Apostle saith: where sin doth abound there grace doth superabound. He can get himself honour of *Pharao*, and all his enemies, and make their sinnes declare abroad his righteousnes. *Augu. super Psal.104*

Let no man therefore despaire of grace, in respect of the greatnes and continuance of sin. God suffreth some to go verie farre to make them know themselues, to roote them in vertue, and to ground them in repentance, and the better to reduce them to humilitie of minde.

similitude

As he that pulleth downe an olde decaied house in miserable ruine, and buildeth vp a newe in the same room, bestoweth much time about the foundation, that that being stedfast, the structure and building

building that is coupled vnto it may remaine firme and sure so God for a time letteth alone a sinner, & suffreth him to lie as a rotten wal vpon the ground: he is long in laying his foundation, that that being grounded vpon godly humilitie, he might builde thereupon his whole worke of pietie.

After *Dauid* had couered himselfe with sinne, as it were with a garment, and had dwelled in it, adding sinne vnto sinne after adulterie bringing forth murther: when he was taxed at the length for them & proceeded against by *Nathan*, he was presentlie much humbled, & for euer afterward more prouident and aduised. Yea he himselfe had a feeling in himselfe, what a cure and good his sin had wrought vpon him. For this much hee doubted not to confesse, saying: *It is good for mee that thou hast humbled me, that I might learne thy law.* 2. *Sam.* 12 Sin causeth humilitie: *Psal.* 119

Peter by his threefold sinne and defection, was euer after better taught to curble his presumption, and to weigh his owne strength, and not so to flourish before the fielde, and triumph before the victorie. Wherefore when Christ asked him after the resurrection, whether that hee loued him, he appealed to Christes iudgement, replying confidently, *Thou knowest that I loue thee.* Hee was before so well warned, as hee was now well armed. His former wound stirred vp his spirits, kindled his zeale, and made him more couragious. *Iohn.* 21

Paul was a chosen vessell of Gods grace, and a deare saint of God, but hee was first a persecutor, before hee was a preacher, a *Saul* that persecuted *1. Tim.* 1

the true *Dauid*, before hee was a *Paul* a professour and worshipper of the son of *Dauid*. But the common remembrance of his wonted wickednes, bred in him all humblenes, he had neuer without doubt beene so exceeding dutifull, had hee not before beene so exceeding sinfull. It is not to be spoken howe his former sinnes did tame him: as before his sinne was as a sworde to wounde him, so it serued nowe as a medicine for to heale him. As often iniquitie doth bring forth humilitie: so it doth afterwarde stirre vs vnto vigilancie. The fish will afterwarde bee warie of that place, where shee hath before beene pricked with the hooke, and the birds which haue beene fettered and entangled with the snare, and haue hurt a wing or ioynt, will afterwardes be circumspect, and will flie the net: so sinne, albeit for a time it is hurtfull, yet in the end it is verie much profitable, as giuing vs warning by former mishaps, hereafter more circumspectlie to looke vnto our steps.

Sin causeth vigilancie.

So long as the thorne doth grow within the vines, they do choake them and hinder them that they cannot flourish, but if you roote them vp, and set them about the vines, they serue as a hedge, and a defence for the vines: so sinne so long as it remaineth in the minde, and groweth within the soule, it pricketh and woundeth the soul exceedingly, but beeing digged vp, and set in the valley of our sight and remembrance, it serueth as a wall to gard and preserue vs, that neither the wilde Boare that commeth out of the forrest, nor the Beare that issueth from

A similitude

from the wood shall roote it vp.

We haue last of all this benefite by our former sinnes, that they make vs afterwarde more zealous in Gods seruice, and to runne with *Dauid* the way of his commandements. There are none so hot professors of religion, then those who before haue bin stone colde in religion. Sin maketh vs afterward more religious.

As a wayfaring man that is left behind will make the more haste, and mend his pace when he seeth that his companie is farre afore him, that hee might not either wander he knoweth not whither, or trauell solitarilie: so he that is put backward and behind by sin, when as he seeth it, he striueth more feruently to ouerget his felowes, and maketh more haste in his iourney towards heauen. A similitude

Thus God (as a cunning and expert physition, of poysonable confections maketh comfortable electuaries) of sin which is a ranke & most deadly poison, maketh approued medicins. Man by his sin purposeth only euill, but God directeth & turneth it vnto good. In a mischieuous mind, the confederat brethren sold *Ioseph* into Egypt, but God so disposed it as *Ioseph* acknowledged, & the end manifested, that he was sent thither for their preseruation. A similitude *Genes.* 37. *Gen.* 50

Saul plotted the murther & destruction of *Dauid* desiring of him a hundred foreskins of ỹ Philistins, (for he said my hand shall not bee vpon him, but the hands of the Philistins) but though his eies were euil, yet was god good, & from this platforme of his ruine and confusion, he tooke occasion to work his renowne, & to make his name famous by his noble victories. *1. Sam.* 18

Iudas betraied his Lorde and maiſter, and committed a vilde ſinne with as ſinful an intention: but God thereupon brought his good worke to paſſe, and wrought our ſaluation.

The ninth Chapter.

Of the Prodigall ſonne, his execution of his purpoſe, wherein is conſidered the preſent neceſſitie of our ſpeedie repentance, without our further delaying it.

THe Prodigall ſonne beeing full of the ſpirit, and wholy conſecrated vnto heauenly thoughts, hee lingereth not that the ſpirit might coole within him, but whileſt it is hot, and the fire breaketh out hee followeth the effects and motions of the ſpirit: for it is reported in the hiſtory of him, *that hee aroſe and went vnto his father.*

In ſaying that *he aroſe*, he inſinuateth that he did lie down before. In that he nowe *went vnto him*, it is to be concluded that before hee did ſtand ſtill, or turne his back, and went away from him. That it is added *to his father*, it is conſequent that before hee went vnto a tyrant.

It is moſt behouefull for vs to do the like to bee obedient to the heauẽly calling, to accept of grace in the time of grace, to open the doores of our ſoules when Chriſt knocketh, that he might enter in, and come and ſup with vs: we intend a conuerſion

sion, and returne vnto God, but wee can finde no time for it. All our time is too little for our selues to waste and consume vpon our pleasures and our sins: wee dally too much with God in delaying our duties, and posting off his seruice from time to time, till there be no time for it: wee must therefore performe our vowes which wee promise vnto God, a timely sacrifice is most acceptable vnto him.

It was too late for the fiue foolish Virgines to knocke, when as the gate was fast shut against them. And for the rich glutton, to howle and crie to *Abraham*, when hee was in hell in tormentes. Christ willeth vs while wee haue light to walke in the light: for the night will come wherein no man can worke. Whilest wee haue time (saith the holie Apostle) let vs do good vnto all. And if we will enquire, and seeke after God, *Esay* willeth vs to seeke him whilest he may be found. *Matt. 25* *Luke, 16* *Ioh. 12* *Ioh. 9* *Gal 6* *Esay. 54*

The hope of long life which flattereth many, and staieth their repentance, is erroneous and diuelish: for it is presumption and intolerable vsurpation, to arrogate to our selues that which is proper vnto God, which is to dispose and set downe the times, hauing had our answere in this case before in the person of the disciples, vnto whome it was said, *It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the father hath kept in his own power.* *Actes. 1*

If so be thou haddest a charter of thy life, and that thou wert certified how long thou hadst to liue: yet shouldest thou not put off thy conuersion to the last, as if God were not worthie to be serued with the

firſt. Looke howe thou ſerueſt him, thou ſhalt be ſerued of him. If thou giueſt him the lees, and bottome of thy veſſell, thou ſhalt drinke of the dregs and bitterneſſe of his cup. *For there is a cup in the Lords hand, the wine thereof is red and full mixt, as for the dregs thereof, the vngodly ſuck them vp*, ſaith the Prophet *Dauid*.

Pſal. 65

When as *Iacobs* ſonnes ſhould the ſecond time bee ſent downe into Egypt, *Iacob* willed them to carry with them the beſt preſents to the man: let vs before we deſcend into the graue, aſcribe vnto the Lord who is worthy of all homage, the beſt ſeruice that we can, the flower of our life, and the vigor of our mind.

God willed in the law, that the beſt tythes, the fatteſt ſacrifices, & the chiefeſt oblations ſhould be giuen vnto him, to ſignifie ẏ the beſt of the man is his portion: he wil not be dodged with, & ſatisfied with the worſt, with our crooked old age, when our ſences are decaied, and we are fit for nothing. *Curſed is he* (ſaith God by his Prophet *Malachy*) *who offereth vnto God the lame and the blind.*

Num. 18

He is the fondeſt fellow that euer was heard of, who falling into a deepe riuer, and hauing preſent helpe offered him whileſt hee yet ſwimmeth vpon the ſworde of the water, maketh refuſall of it, and aunſwereth that he will not bee helped before the next yeare, when as hee is in danger to ſinke preſentlie: ſo what ſhall wee ſaie of them, who plunging themſelues into the deepe pit of ſinne, and by the hande of repentaunce whileſt they

Similitude

are

are recouerable may bee dragged out, doe giue ouer this holde, and beeing in perill of present damnation, doe slacke the opportunitie of present remedie, and to a yeere, nay I know not to howe manie yeeres, they doe put off this offer, and slacke this repentance. Arise thou therefore, sit no longer still: goe thou forward out of hand with the Prodigall sonne, repayre vnto thy father, and offer him thy seruice. It is not enough to purpose it with him, but to performe it in deede with him. *Rebecca* had not onely eareings of golde, but bracelets thereof likewise; our armes must bee adorned as well as our eares, for it is not sufficient to haue eares to heare, and mouthes to speake, but wee must also haue handes and armes to worke withall. There bee many who haue *Iacobs* smooth voice, but they haue *Esaus* rough handes. Their mouthes are far greater then their handes, which is monstrous in nature, for they worde it much, but they worke it little. The figge Tree had fairer leaues but no figges, wee are deceitefull Gibeonites, and painted tombes like Pharisies.

If thou conceiuest in thy minde a repentance, and doest not arise and practise this repentance, but from daie to daie delaiest it, bee thou sure that thou shalt not haue it when thou wilt, it will bee farre from thee. *Consuetudo est altera natura*; Custome is a kinde of nature, *& habitus induratus*, an obdurate habite, which cannot be forsaken.

If

If we accuſtome our ſelues ſtil to ſin, and do not turne from it when God ſheweth vs mercie, and toucheth our affections with the finger of his grace, it will bee verie difficult hereafter to forſake it.

1. Sam. 17 *Dauid* could not endure to haue vpon him *Sauls* armour, though it were of proofe, and exceeding coſtly, and why? but only for want of vſe, he was otherwiſe accuſtomed.

A ſimilitude A broome onely ſweepeth away the duſt, it taketh not awaie the drie, and hardened dirt, an iron ſhouell muſt ſcrape off that: for time and continuance hath ſo faſtened it to the grounde, as it is harde to get it off. We cannot preuaile againſt our cuſtome of ſinne, vnleſſe God worketh more effectuallie with his power, and draweth vs more forcibly.

A ſimilitude When as firſt a man cõmeth to dwell in a poore village, and firſt drinketh of their troubled and muddy water which that ſoile yeeldeth, it ſticketh at his ſtomacke, it much diſtempereth him, it diſagreeth mightilie with his nature, and he wondereth how the people of that place can liue with it: but if this man abideth and dwelleth ſtill among them, his ſtomacke being vſed and accuſtomed to that drinke, it will at laſt goe well downe with him, it will ſeeme ſauorie and holeſome enough vnto him. In the like ſort ſince ſinne is as noiſome as puddle water, the ſtomacke of the ſoule at the beginning cannot away with it, but it much diſquieteth it, inſomuch as a ſinner is very heauy for it: but after he

hath beene nusled and traded vp in sinne, and hee hath drunke iniquitie (as *Iob* saith) as an Asse drinketh water, and sinne is become as another nature vnto him, he is then altered, he is then pleased, and delighted with it.

If thou blowest well the candle assoone as it goeth out, thou maiest light it againe thereby: but if thou pausest, and staiest a while till the fire that is in the snast goeth out, it cannot bee recouered: so if assone as the good motions of the spirit which doe shine in thy hart like a bright burning candle seem to waxe dimme, and to bee extinguished, whilest there is yet a little fire, and some sparkes remaining thou doest labour to reduce it and bring it to his light, it may bee well effected: but let thou it alone till all the fire bee out, and till it bee vtterlie deade in thee, and it will bee a thing impossible to reuiue it. A similitude

The first, and second stroke which the butcher giueth the oxe, maketh him to fling, and take on exceedingly: but after a while when hee is loaden with blowes, hee is so amazed, and ouercome of them, as he remaineth senceles and past all feeling, he will not stir, strike him neuer so much. The first and second blowe which sinne giueth vs, toucheth our hearts, and affecteth vs grieuously, but when heapes of sinnes do ouertake vs, and smite vs without end, our consciences then are seared, as it were with hot Irons, our soules are benummed, and wee sinne without all sence. A similitude

Repent we therefore and returne we, when wee may

may vnto our heauenlie Father: put we it not off from daie to daie, leaſt ſuddainly the daie of the Lorde commeth, and in our ſecuritie wee be deſtroied. *Pœnitentia quæ ab infirmo ſit, timeo ne ipſa infirma ſit. Pœnitentia quæ a moriente ſit, timeo ne ipſa moriatur.* Our repentance which commeth from vs while wee are weake is greatlie to bee feared will bee alſo weake. Repentaunce which is deferred til we be about to die, is in great daunger likewiſe to die. It is therefore very fearefull to ouerſhip the ſeaſons, and let goe opportunitie offered vs of repentance, It is not onely hard to repent in the ende, in reſpecte of want of vſe, for commonlie as a man liueth ſo hee dieth, but alſo it will bee as difficult vnto him in reſpect of GOD. For at the houre of death thy bodie and minde is weakeſt, and the diuell is ſtrongeſt. God then doth more forſake thee, and the Diuel is more readie to take thee: for God ſaith thus vnto vs. *I called and you would not come, I will therefore reioice in your deſtruction: calamity ſhal come vppon you, you ſhall call on mee, and I ſhall refuſe to come.* To the like purpoſe the ſpirit ſpeaketh euidentlie by his Prophet *Hieremy, We haue cured Babilon, and yet ſhee is not healed, beholde wee will forſake hir.* God hath good reaſon vtterlie to forſake vs, when as his calling can take no place in vs. God hath no reaſon to ſtay our leiſures, but it is iuſt, that as wee refuſe him when hee offereth himſelfe to vs, that hee ſhould doe the like when wee muſt haue neede of him. Well ſaieth ſaint *Au-*

Auguſtinus.

Gods grace is wekeſt at the houre of death.

Prou. 2

Ierem. 51

guſtine.

Iustine. Hac animaduersione percutitur pec- Aug. serm. *Innocentium.*
cator, vt moriens obliuiscatur sui, qui viuens ob-
litus est Dei. A sinner is worthilie punished with this iudgement at his death to bee forgetfull of himselfe, who all his life was so vnmindfull of his God.

As at the houre of death, Gods grace most doth faile vs, so at that exigent the Diuell most preuaileth, with whom he could do nothing in the health of their life, with them hee is most busie in the extremitie of their death. And where hee then preuaileth hee getteth a great conquest which he cannot loose againe. If whilest thou hast thy health, thy strength, and thy best minde, thou art so weake as thou canst not ouercome the smallest temptations: howe shalt thou thinkest thou when thou art weake and crooked, and thy sences faile thee, ouercome strong illusions? If so be when the enemie is at the weakest thou canst not subdue him; there is but smal hope that when thou art weakest, & he at the strongest, ÿ shalt do ought against him. If in thy vigor and prime age when thou art lustie as an Eagle, thou beest but a coward: when thou laiest bedred, inuironed, and beset with sicknesses & diseases, thou wilt not be able to look him on the face. *There is no man* (saieth the Psalmist) *who in death remembreth thee, & who shal giue thee thanks in the pit?* Wherfore thou dost wel, if as *Ecclesiastes* counselleth thee thou remembrest thy Creator in the daies of thy youth. If whē thou beest able to sin no more, thou surceasest to sinne; it may

The diuel is strongest at the houre of death.

Psal. 6

Eccle. 12

be

be truly ſaide, that ſin doth leaue thee, thou leaueſt not ſinne.

A ſimilitude

Thou doeſt like the Merchaunt, who in a grieuous ſtorme whē there is no other remedie, throweth his wares and aduentures into the ſea, but if the tempeſt ceaſeth hee throweth no more in, but laboreth to recouer as much as hee can of his former loſſe againe.

Come home therefore vnto the Lorde thy God, and what good motions God putteth in thy mind, thoſe with this Prodigall and loſt ſonne put thou in practiſe. It is to too daungerous and thou makeſt the hardeſt aduenture that can bee, in trifling the time, and putting off thy conuerſion and returne vnto God, vnto future and latter times, which perhaps thou ſhalt not ſee. I reade but of one that was ſaued at the laſt vppon his repentance, which was one of the theeues crucified with Chriſt. *Vnus vt nemo deſperet, vnus vt nemo præſumat.* There was one that no man might diſpaire: there was but one that no man might preſume. When as a man hath a great taske enioined him, and but a little time to doe it, he is very foreſeeing that this time bee well ſpent, and that nothing of it bee loſt: for otherwiſe this worke cannot be done and he cannot haue his wages; our taske is our conuerſion and returne to God; our time is this life, which is ſhort and vncertaine; our wages is the ſaluation of our ſoules, the inheritance and poſſeſſion of the kingdome of heauen. God almightie giue vs grace to be carefull of our time that wee may ende our good worke, and

Auguſt.

A ſimilitude

fight

fight a good fight, and haue our happy wages in the world without ende.

An abstract of the prodigall sonne his formall confession, or a sinner his meditation and humble sute to God for the forgiuenes of his sinnes.

A Prayer.

O *My gracious God and most mercifull father: I thy humble seruant, vtterly vnworthy to be called thy sonne, doe here submit my selfe in all obedience vnto thee: and confesse before thee my infinite and grieuous misdeeds committed, both against heauen which is thy seate, and earth which is thy footstoole. O Lord I dare not looke vp vnto heauen, I haue so sinned against heauen, by sinning against thee that dwellest in heauen, and by making more account of this worlde then of heauen. I dare not lift vp mine eies vnto thee I haue so sinned against thee, so as the sight of thee feareth me, and thy feare most mightie God is on euerie side. I doe acknowledge my wickednesse and my sinne is euer before thee. Against thee onely haue I sinned, and doone this euill that thou maiest bee iustified in thy sayings, and cleere when thou art iudged. I am hee whome thou diddest vouchsafe by adoption and grace to make thine owne sonne, thou hast nourished and brought mee vppe, but I haue rebelled against thee. The Oxe did knowe his owner, and the Asse his maisters crib, but I*

thy ſonne did not knowe thee, I thy ſeede and choſen did not obeie thee. Wherefore thou gaueſt mee ouer vnto my owne heartes luſtes, and didſt let mee followe mine owne imaginations: So as I committed all kinde of filthineſſe, and receiued ſuch recompence of my wickednesſe as was meete; ſo as now I am a ſtranger and forreiner vnto thee, I am not therefore worthie of the name of a ſonne, O let me be numbred among thy hired ſeruantes. O father beholde me in the face of thine annointed, for one day in thy courts is better then a thouſand with the vngodlie: I had rather haue the place of meaneſt ſeruice, and to bee a doore keeper in thine houſe, then to dwell in the tentes of the vngodlie, and ſit in the ſeate of ſinners. I am he for whoſe ſake thy onlie begotten ſonne became man, bowed the heauens, and came downe, made himſelfe of no reputation, but humbled himſelfe euen vnto the death, the death of the croſſe. Thou haſt giuen this ſonne for mee a moſt vilde ſeruaunt, that of a ſeruant I might be made a ſonne, by beeing conformable vnto the image of thy ſonne: but I alas haue liued in the fleſh, haue quenched the ſpirit, and haue walked like an infidel. I haue forgotten God that made mee, and the ſtrong God of my ſaluation: I haue beene reprobate and abhommable, and vnto euery good work vnprofitable: whither therefore ſhall I flee for ſuccour? if I looke vp to heauen, I am diſmaied, for I haue ſinned againſt heauen: if I repaire vnto thee, I am yet in miſerie, for I haue ſinned againſt thee. I am hee whome thou didſt preuent with thy liberall

blessinges, vpon whome thou diddest bestowe a great portion of thy grace, whome thy tender mercie embraced on euerie side. But I haue wantonlie and wickedlie wasted them, by liuing in my lustes and not in thy lawes, by fulfilling the lustes of the flesh, and of the minde, by working all wickednesse and that with greedinesse. Thou indued'st mee with wisdome aboue others, with a greater knowledge of thy word then others: I was planted in the house of the Lord, that I might flourish in the courtes of my God by being ingrafted into the bodie of the Church and communion of thy saintes, and made partaker of thy holie sacraments. Thou hast not done so to other nations, neither haue other people had such knowledge of thy lawes. But woe is me, I haue despised these thy mercies, broken thy couenants, dishallowed thy most holie and reuerend name. I haue sinned O father not meanlie as other men, but mightilie aboue other; for I haue sinned against heauen thy holie place before thee the holiest, and in earth, the place where thy name is called vpon: I am not therefore worthie neither do I desire to be called thy son, but let me be thy seruant, and ô Lord saue thy seruant who putteth his trust in thee. O remember not my olde sinnes which I haue cõmitted since I went from thee, but of thy goodnes preserue thou him that is appointed to die. Thy great bountie shewed to hired seruaunts remaining in thy house, putteth mee in hope of the like to bee shewed vnto mee thy Sonne returning to thy house. Thy seruants haue enough, and I thy sonne O father like vnto a runnagate continue in scarcity: they

eate of the plenteousneſſe that commeth from thy Table, but I am conſtrained to beg my bread in deſolate places. And this miſery O father, I muſt needes confeſſe is of my ſelfe, for I woulde needes depart from thee, the health of my life, the light of my countenance and my mercifull God. Wherefore now ſitting by the waters of Babylon, I cannot but weepe when I remember thee O Sion. But turne thou my captiuitie as the riuers of the ſouth, and let mee heare of ioie and gladneſſe, that the bones which thou haſt broken may reioice. Though I haue ſinned againſt thee, yet I come vnto thee, and though thy iuſtice muſt ſhewe vengeaunce vpon ſinne, yet I appeale vnto thy mercie in thy deere ſonne Chriſt for the pardoning of my ſinne. I haue ſinned and doone wickedlie, yet I knowe thy mercie is aboue my ſinnes. One depth ſwalloweth vp another, let the depth therefore of thy mercie deuoure and ſwallowe vp the depth of my ſinnes. Thy hande is not ſo ſhort but thou canſt ſaue, nor thy eare ſo thicke but thou canſt heare. Heare mee therefore O King of Heauen nowe I call vppon thee, and bee mercifull vnto my ſinnes, for they are great. Shew ſome token of kindneſſe which thou doeſt vſe to ſhew to thoſe who put their truſt in thee before the ſonnes of men: Thou diddeſt not repell the Publican, diſdaine the Phariſie, refuſe the Harlot, or exclude the thiefe. Peter who denied thee, and Paule who perſecuted thee, vppon their returne were receiued into grace. Father I returne, conſider my complaint for I am brought very lowe: deliuer my ſoule out of

trouble

trouble, and my life from the bloudthirstie: and though I be not worthy to be thy sonne, yet make mee thy seruant, so I thy seruant shall reioice in thee, I shall bee euer giuing of thankes for the operation of thy hands. Grant this grace oh deere father for Iesus Christ his sake thy most deere son and my only blessed Sauiour, Amen.

The ende of the second Booke of the regresse of the prodigall Sonne.

THE THIRD BOOKE.

Discouering of the ioyful welcome home of the prodigal Son, and the honorable entertainment which his Father gaue him.

The first Chapter:

That the meere mercie of God is the maine motiue of our comming home to God, and the sole efficient cause of our whole saluatiõ plainly insinuated by this circumstance of this historie, of the father his seeing the prodigall sonne, when hee was yet a farre off.

A Bishops saying of *Augustine.*

A Reuerend and holie Bishop, when as Saint *Augustines* mother was in exceeding heauinesse for hir sonnes peruersenesse before hee was conuerted, seeing her strange passions and hir aboundaunt teares which shee powred out for him, grauely aunswered thus: *It is impossible for thy sonne to perish, for whome such teaers are shed.* It cannot bee expressed howe sorrowful

ſorrowfull ſoule in all humilitie throwing downe itſelfe before his mercie ſeate, is acceptable vnto God, and gracious in his eyes. It is not poſsible that hee ſhoulde bee ſhut out that knocketh at his doore, or not finde comforte that is ſorrowfull for his ſinnes, or that his teares ſhoulde not bee put into the bottell, and GOD ſhoulde not wipe awaie all teares from his eies. *Hee that nowe goeth on his waie weeping, and beareth forth good ſeed, doubtleſſe ſhall come againe with ioie, and bring his ſheaues with him.* This much holie Scripture aboundantlie doth approoue, but principallie the preſident of this prodigall perſon. For hee no ſooner crieth but the Lorde heareth him, no ſooner returneth but the Lorde meeteth him, naie to manifeſt his longing after him, he a far off eſpieth him, and at hand embraceth him. Pſal. 126

God the father therefore his aboundant mercie towardes vs his wicked and rebellious children in this example is ſet before our eyes. It is heere twofold wiſe propoũded, vnder which two kindes whatſoeuer more particularlie may be further illuſtrated properlie is cõtained. The firſt is his mercy towards vs a far off: the ſecond is his mercie towardes vs being nigh and in preſence with him. In the deſcription of the firſt theſe notes as euident demonſtrations thereof are premiſed and prefixed. *His ſeeing him a far off, his falling on his necke, his kiſſing him.* We wil firſt intreat and diſcourſe of the firſt, *His ſeeing him a far off.*

The grace of God, the cause of our conuersion.

He beginneth with this first, because this is that which chiefly worketh in vs, for his grace and louing countenance must go before, else how should our repentance and conuersion followe after. A sinner is like the Eccho which cannot speake first, but must answere a voice: God must call before we can come: hee must speake first, and then we answere, and say with holy *Samuel*, *Speake Lord for thy seruant heareth.* We haue nothing of our selues without ỹ grace of God: *For of his fulnes haue we all receiued grace for grace.* When wee beholde our face and image in a glasse, the shadowe of it moueth as the man mooueth whose image the same is; the countenaunce thereof cannot looke vpwarde, vnlesse the man himselfe the substance of that shadow looketh vpwarde first. Wee are Gods image, as he moueth vs, so we are moued; we cannot looke vp to heauen of our selues, God first must lift vp our eies thereunto.

A similitude

1. Sam. 3

A similitude

A similitude

It is easie for any man to kil himselfe, but impossible againe to giue life vnto himselfe: it is easie for a man to kill himselfe with sinne, but it is not in his power to quicken himselfe by repentance of his sinne. Hence is it that Christ saith. *No man cõmeth to the father, vnlesse the father who sent me draweth him.* And that the church praieth thus. *Drawe me after thee, and we wil run vnto the sauor of thy sweet ointments.*

Ioh. 6

Cantic. 1.

When as God commmanded the Prophet *Ezechiel* to raise vp himselfe, and to stand vpon his feet, immediatly the spirit of God did come vpon him,

Ezech. 2

and

and set him vpon his feet: he had neuer beene able to haue risen of himselfe, if the spirit had not helped him.

There be certaine birdes of verie swift flight, but therewithall so long winged, as if by chaunce they fall vnto the ground their traine so traileth vppon the ground, as they cannot mount vp againe anie more and recouer their flight. It is so with vs, who sometimes of a sudden would soare verie high, and as a birde would flie swiftly vp to heauen; but our wings and feathers so spread the grou̅d, as whensoeuer we fall downe to it againe, as commonlie we doe being earthly minded, we rise no more vp, vnlesse that God himselfe erecteth vs by his spirit. A similitude

As *Rachels* cattell could not drinke of the water of the brooke before *Iacob* had rolled away the stone that couered it: so there is a stone which laieth ouer our hearts, which vnlesse God first remoueth, we can not drink of the waters of repentance. For it is God only that mollifieth my heart, and taketh away this stone, as the iust man *Iob* saith. The Prophet admiring the power of god, who with water forced out of a stonie rocke satisfied his people, exclaimeth in this wise, Which turned ẏ hard rock into a standing water, and the flint stone into a springing well: may not wee likewise admire the Lords power, and celebrate his praise, who of his goodnes striketh the stonie hearts of sinners, and forceth out of them the water of repe̅tance? There are sundrie locks which are so made, as they easily may be locked without keyes: but they cannot a- *Gen.* 29 *Iob.* 23 *Psal.* 114 A similitu

gaine

gaine be open without keyes. We may locke and ſhut out our ſelues from the kingdome of heauen, but without him that hath the keyes of *Dauid*, to open when no man can ſhutte, and ſhut when no man can open, wee can not open the doore of this kingdome. Turne me O Lord (ſaith the Prophet *Ieremie*) and I ſhall be turned. We of our ſelues doe turne from God, and do not turne vnto him, vnleſſe God himſelfe doth turne vs. Wee are without God as *Samſon* without eyes, and remaine in the blindneſſe and ignorance of our ſinne. It is God who openeth our eyes and our hearts, deliuereth vs from our ſinnes our ſpirituall enemies.

Thren. 5

God ſaw the prodigall ſonne a farre off, and this immediatelie brought him nigh vnto him: as hee ſeeth vs ſinners when wee are yet farre from him, and thinke of any thing rather then of him. And this is that which moueth our affections, & reconcileth vs again vnto him. The Sunne is of that forcible nature and power, that it pearceth the verie heart of the earth, it engendreth gold and diuers other mettals in the bowels thereof: ſo the reflexion of the Sun beames of Gods grace ſo radiantlie and forciblie worketh in mens harts, as it bringeth forth the golde of faith out of them, and diuerſe other good effects and motions of the ſpirit. *Dauid* extolling the power of God, who rebuking the red ſea, made the waters of it ſtand vpon an heape, and made ỹ waters of *Iordan* ſtart aſide for the people to go through, thus wondreth at it, ſaying: *What aileth thee O thou ſea that thou fledſt, & thou Iordan*

a ſimilitude

Pſal. 114

dan that thou wert driuen backe? But I ceasing not to wonder at this mans turning backe, I expostulate the case thus: What ayleth thee, O thou sinner that thou fleest, and thou runnagate prodigall sonne that thou turnest backe? Wee cannot sufficientlie wonder at Gods grace, who made this vncleane wretch the doung of the earth, and the Clay of the streetes, purer and brighter then the starres and Sunne before him. Oh the deepenesse of the riches, both of the wisedome and knowledge of God. What is man that he is so mindfull of him? or the sonne of man whom he should visit, and see a farre off? For our condition is the selfe same which this prodigal mans was. For when we were all a farre off from him, straungers from his couenaunt of promise, aliants from the common wealth of Israel, when wee were deade in sinne: God who is rich in mercie hath quickened vs, by graciouslie beholding vs. He hath chosen vs from all eternitie to bee his people, and the sheepe of his pasture, but not by our merits, but by his mercies: not that wee chose him, but that hee chose vs, and saw vs a farre off, when wee did not see him.

Rom. 11.

Ephes. 2.

Ephe. 1

Did not the Lord see *Abraham* a far off, whenas he liued among the idolatrous Chaldeans, and called him from thence, and made a couenant of saluation with him, that he would be his God, and the god of his seed? was not *Adam* before him seen a farre off, whenas hee turning his eyes from him, and fleeing from his presence, God called him

vnto

vnto him, and lifted him vp (being deſperately deiected with the ſhame of ſinne which hee newlie had committed) with the promiſe of his grace by the ſeede of the woman, by which this his ſinne ſhould againe be remitted?

Was not *Dauid* much exorbitant, and exceeding far from God, when as the Prophet *Nathan* was ſent vnto him to call him home againe, and bring him vnto God?

Did not God behold the Iſraelites afarre off, from the habitation of his dwelling, when hee did ſee the miſerie of them in captiuitie, and deliuered them out of the hands of their enemies, & brought their feete into a large roome, by planting them in the pleaſant promiſed lande of Canaan? What ſhould I rippe vp ſuch varietie of examples, as may ſerue this purpoſe? Thus he beheld *Mathew* the
Matt.9 cuſtomer, *Zacheus* the vſurer, *Paul* the perſecu-
luk.19 ter, and vs the Gentils, when we were, as the Apo-
Ephe.2 ſtle ſaith, a far off, being without hope & without god in ỹ world, calling vs his people who were not his people; and his beloued, who were not his beloued. The grace of God therefore ſeeing vs a far off, being in our ſins, draweth vs frō our ſins, calleth vs to a confeſſion, and repentance of our ſinnes, and pardoneth all our ſinnes. Without this there is nothing that we can doe of our ſelues, being not able to thinke a good thought. God muſt looſe the
Iſ.52 bondes of thy necke O captiue daughter of Syon. *Peter* denied his maiſter, and wept not, for God did not looke vpon him: he denied him the ſecond

time

time, and yet did not weepe; for why, as yet the Lord did not looke vpon him: hee denied him the thirde time, and hee wept bitterly, but the text ſaith that the Lord did look vpon him. O Lord our God then looke vpon vs, and then wee ſhall with *Peter* weepe bitterly for our ſinnes. *Luke* .22

The ſecond Chapter.

Of the mercie and compaſſion by this father ſhewed vnto the prodigall ſonne.

THe circumſtance of the father his ſeeing his ſonne whileſt he was a farre off, beeing firſt of all remembred in good order, this inference of his compaſſion ſhewed him as an expoſition of the ſame is immediatelie adioyned. For God his ſeeing vs is no ſuperficiall and bare ſight of vs, it conſiſteth not in an idle ſpeculation, but hee ſeeth vs to ſhewe mercie, and compaſſion of vs, and to worke our ſaluation. God ſeeth not his ſeruants as hee doth the wicked caitifes, *Annas*, *Caiphas*, *Pilate*, and ſuch like, who ſtil remaine obdurate and hardened in their ſinnes: but he ſeeth them by beſtowing his graces vppon them, as *Peter* and *Andrew*: *Iames* and *Iohn*: *Nathanael* and *Matthew*, who forthwith left their nettes, the ſeate of cuſtome, and vngodlie trade of ſinne, making them Apoſtles, veſſels and miniſters of his great mercie. *Mat.*4 *Ioh* .1 *Luke.*5

There is verie great oddes betweene God his ſeeing Great diffe rence ther

is betweene god his seeing vs, and man his seeing vs.

seeing vs, and man his seeing vs. Oftentimes one Courtier is heard to say vnto another, Did the Prince to day see thee? and eftsoones he answereth I. But what of that? for hee often is neuer a whit the better for it, for infinite people doe crowde to see the Prince, and the Prince eieth many of them, and yet thereby benefiteth not any of them. But if God seeth vs, it is well with vs, it cannot bee in vaine, but effectuall vnto vs. For the eyes of the lord are the portall doores of pittie, the windowes and casements that haue a prospect to saluation. He alwaies beholdeth vs with the eyes of kindnesse, as *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, *Loth* in *Sodome*, *Zachee* vpon the figge tree, *Peter* in the high Priests hal, the theefe vpon the crosse, and *Paul* when he was *Saul* in his iourney to Damascus.

Gen 19
Exod 3
Luke, 19
Mark. 14
Actes. 9

Howe happie was this for the prodigall sonne for his father to see him, for immediatlie he had compassion of him: so is it with vs, hee hath mercie on vs as soone as hee seeth vs. That we maie say with *Agar*, *Thou Lord lookedst on me*. The issue whereof was, that the Lorde did heare her tribulation.

Genes. 26.

Did God at any time looke vpon anie, and did not shewe him mercie? He looked vpon the Israelites, and presentlie hee deliuered them from the Egyptians. He beheld *Peter*, and the yse which before couered his heart when he abiured his Maister, melted at the heate and fire of his spirit, and made a great thawe, so as streames of water, and brinish teares issued from thence. Hee

Exod. 3

Mark. 14

sawe

saw *Mathew* as he went by the way gathering vp of mony, and forthwith he bestowed a better office of him, and charged him to gather vp soules vnto him. He sawe certaine fishermen, and he ordained them fishers of men. Hee saw him that was blind from his birth, and his sight was restored him. He sawe multitudes following him, and hee opened his mouth and taught them. Hee lifted vppe his eyes and sawe another multitude following him, and hee communed with *Philip* about bread and prouision of victuals for them. Hee did looke on the low estate of his handmaid, and hereupon the virgin peremptorilie concludeth, that *All generations shall call her blessed.* Matt. 9 Matt. 4 Iohn. 9 Matth. 5 Iohn. 6 Luke. 1

Gods eyes are compared to the Doues eyes vpon the riuers of water, because they are most pure, cleane and simple, farre from all euill, and full of all goodnesse. In respect whereof the holie Ghost when he descended, assumed vnto himselfe the forme of a Doue. *Dauid* vniteth and knitteth togither Gods sight, and Gods mercie, because towardes his Saints they cannot bee sundred. Oh Lorde looke vpon mee, and bee mercifull vnto me, for I am poore and in miserie. Else where hee singeth in effect the same dittie, making Gods mercie the effect of his seeing vs. The eyes of the Lord are vpon the iust: and what then? his eares are open vnto their prayers. Come vnto me (saith the same Prophet in gods person) and ye shall be lightned. Cant. 5 Matt. 3 Psal. 24 Psal. 33 Psal. 33

It cannot be but where there is most light, the A similitud

place

place muſt bee warmer; and therefore in the full Moone the nights are warmer, becauſe the light is ſtronger: ſo let God behold vs with the brightnes of his countenaunce, and let the light of his loue ſhine in our hearts, and they ſhall bee warmed with the zeale of the ſpirit, and the fire of his mercie will be kindled within vs.

The preſence of Gods face is admirable, and vnſpeakeable, for it rauiſheth our hearts, and ſuddenlie changeth them, and draweth them to obedience. If the Sunne ſtoode ſtill in Gibeon, and the Moone in the valley of Aialon, and the mightie walles of Hiericho came topling to the ground at the voyce of God, by his ſeruant *Ioſua*, no maruell it is though our ſinnes come tumbling downe, and we returne to God with the prodigall ſonne, when God himſelfe beholdeth vs a farre off to this purpoſe, and hath compaſſion of vs. For the vaſt earth trembleth at his look, if he but toucheth the mountaines, they do ſmoke.

Ioſua. 10

Ioſue 6

Pſal. 104

Finallie, as all mercie is preſent towardes vs, when Gods eyes doe behold vs: ſo all miſerie and calamitie dooth befall vs, when his face is turned from vs.

Hereupon ſaith *Dauid*. *When thou turneſt away thy face they are troubled, if thou takeſt away their breath they die, & return vnto their duſt.* *Dauid* once perſwaded himſelfe that his eſtate was ſo ſure as it could not bee altered, when hee ſpake in this wiſe. *I ſayd in my proſperitie, I ſhall neuer be remooued, thou Lord of thy goodnes haſt made my hill*

Pſal. 104

Pſal. 30

ſo

ſo ſtrong: But the euent did put an other ſong into his mouth, and made him to recant, and reuerſe this proude boaſting ſaying. *Thou didſt turne thy face from mee, and I was troubled.* Wherefore praie wee the Lorde to beholde vs, that hee woulde by no meanes turne awaie his face from vs, leaſt as *Dauid* ſayth, if hee maketh himſelfe as though hee ſeeth vs not, wee bee as they that goe downe into the pitte: Leaſt all our prayers bee made in vaine, and our ſutes doe take repulſe, hee ſaying vnto vs as vnto the olde Iſraelites: *When yee ſhall ſtretch out your handes, I will hide mine eyes from you, and though yee make manie prayers, I will not heare you, for your handes are full of blood.* Eſay. 1

But the prodigall ſonne his former diſpoſition conſidered, the preſent compaſſion of the father had of him is woorthie to bee obſerued. For hee was a man wholie ſwallowed vppe of ſinne, wilfullie walking after his owne wicked wayes, there was no feare of God before his eyes: Yet the father rebuketh him not in his indignation, neither dooth hee chaſtice him in his heauie diſpleaſure: but hee rather chooſeth to proſecute him with fauour which hee did not deſerue, then perſecute him with iudgement which was moſt due vnto him, Teaching vs the like mercie that we would ſhew to ſuch who beſeech our mercie, howeſoeuer in regarde of their vilde inclinations they bee vnwoorthie of it'. There is none can bee lewder and more infamous then this

Mercy is to be ſhewed to ỹ wicked

fellow vpon whom such abundant fauour was extended: to signifie that howso euer the persons are qualified, yet their miserie by vs must compassionatly be respected. It is the expresse commaundement of Christ that we should be merciful, as our heauenly father is mercifull. Now how he is charitably disposed to the wicked, herein it is euident, in that he maketh the sun to arise on the euil and the good, and sendeth raine on the iust and vniust.

Matth.5

Matt.5

A similitude

The hauen is a refuge and relieſe to all that ariue thereat, whether good or bad: as it succoureth innocents, so it often doth protect robbers. God is the hauen, to whom whosoeuer at any time doe driue, they shall rest in safetie. If thou dost help and relieue vnworthie, with them doubtlesse will resort vnto thee, some who are worthie. *Abraham* confusedly without any difference harboring all strãgers, amõg them vnawares receiued likewise Angels. It is *Salomons* aduice, and *Paul* ratifieth it, *That if our enemie doth hunger, we do feede him*. Let vs measure others by our selues, and let vs doe to others in their wants, which wee would wish might be done to vs in the like necessities. If God shoulde shew his mercie onelie to the good, where should the wicked and sinner appeare? What should become of vs who are borne in wickednes, and doe nothing else but bring foorth vngodlinesse? Wee will not exhibite anie kindnes to our neighbor in his extremitie, because his life offendeth vs: and yet wee craue daylie for helpe at Gods handes, though hourly, diuersly and grieuously we offende him.

Gen.18

Pro.25

Rom.12

him. With what face canst thou so often begge of God, and art so cruell to a begger at the gate, that comes but seldome to thee? Among the fiue thousand who were fed by Christ with fiue loaues and two fishes, there were without doubt some euill disposed people: yet Christ dooth not sunder and diuide them from the rest, but equallie without respect of persons, relieued them togither. It is a pithie saying of S. *Ambrose*: *Misericordia non iudicat de meritis, sed miseriis*. Mercie doth not consider of mens merits, but of their miseries. It is the fashion of the worlde, before they bestowe vpon anie their almes, to make a scrutinie, and inquirie of their liues, There must come question vpon question, before a poore begger can haue the smallest deuotion: This we may well call *Scrutinium diabolicum*: a diueliſh scrutinie. For so it is in deed whē as a needy person doth implore our charity, and we weary him with words, but do very slenderly help him with our works. This trick we first of al lerned of the diuel, who tēpting our sauiour in his extream pouertie, questioned with him as we doe with the poor, whether he were good: for to the like effect he expostulateth thus, *If thou* (saith he) *be the sonne of God, cast thy self down*: making a great doubt whether he were such a man as were worthie to be relieued in this his extremity. but of this matter I spare further to intreate, because I haue particularly discoursed at large of it in my booke of almes.

Iohn. 6

Ambros.

Matt. 4

This I haue thought good to admonish thee of by the way, vnder the example of the fathers

charity vnto his wicked ſonne, that thou maiſt likewiſe diſpoſe thy ſelf to be merciſullie affected euen to wicked people: That ſo thou mighteſt imitate
Matt. 5 thy heauenlie father, and bee perfect as Chriſt willeth thee, as thy father is perfect.

The third Chapter.

The readineſſe of God in forgiuing ſinne, and his ſloxneſſe in puniſhing it: ſignified by the father his running out to meete his prodigall ſonne.

THe father eſpying his ſonne a farre off, contenteth not himſelfe with the ſight of him, or with barelie pittying him, or weeping for him, and ſo leauing him: but he further maketh haſte, and runneth out to meete him, that neyther anie other in the way might hinder him, or otherwiſe the conceit of his fathers ſeueritie vnhappilie terrifie him.

A ſimilitude By this and other circumſtaunces going before, the order that God vſeth in receyuing a ſinner is notablie ſette downe. Hee is like vnto a Nurſe, who ſeeing her tender childe venturing to come vnto her, that it ſhoulde not take a fall, maketh ſpeede and runneth to it; Or
A ſimilitude like vnto a Vulture, or greedie fowle, who firſt ſeeing his pray a farre off, flyeth ſwiftly vnto it, ſeazeth vppon it, and afterwardes deuoureth it: ſo God firſt ſeeing a ſinner a farre off, in the vttermoſt coaſt and region of ſinne, taketh to him

the

the winges of mercie, and flyeth ſpeedilie like a ſwift arrow to him: hee lighteth vpon him, culling him and kiſſing him, and afterward incorporateth him, and maketh him his owne.

The father woulde not ſtay vntil his ſonne ſhoulde come vnto him, and with all ſubmiſſion vpon his knees craue remiſſion, vntill hee had vrged him by many arguments, and pearced his eares and heart with his complaintes: it was enough with him to mooue him to helpe him to know his miſeries, albeit he came not into his preſence to vtter them.

As it is ſufficient to mooue a tender Father to knowe his ſonnes aduerſitie, that hee is fallen into a Riuer, where without ſpeedie helpe he muſt needes bee drowned, albeit hee grateth not his fathers eares with lowde crying vnto him: ſo is it enough with God that hee knoweth our daungers, that wee ſticke faſt in the deepe myre where no water is, or that the ſtreames runne ouer our ſoules, albeit wee crie not vntill wee waxe hoarſe vnto him, and treble and beate often vppon the name of *Our Father*. The Lorde ſeeth well the anguiſh of our mindes, and our groaninges cannot bee hid from him. And therefor hee ſayeth thus by the Prophet *Eſay*, *Before that they crie, I doe heare them.* A ſimilitude

This father in running out to meete his ſonne, teſtifieth his loue which hee beareth to his ſonne, howe readie he was freely to remit whatſoeuer ſin his ſonne did commit. *It* is Gods nature ſo to doe: God is ſlow in puniſhing ſinne.

It hath alwaies beene his cuſtome to bee verie forward to ſhewe ſauour to a ſinner, and to bee vnwilling and ſlow to puniſh him..

Geneſ.3 When as *Adam* had broken the couenant, and was in the tranſgreſſion, it is ſaide that God walked in the Garden in the coole of the day. When as hee came to take vengeance vppon ſinne, hee came not downe riding vpon the heauens, as vpon an horſe, neither did hee come flying vppon the wings of the windes, nay hee came no faſt pace, but walking and creeping as it were a Snayle. If hee had delited in our confuſion, and did not rather expect our conuerſion, woulde hee not thinke you mende his pace, and make more haſte to puniſh vs?

Gene.7 When as God was purpoſed to deſtroy the firſt world, and waſh away the horrible filthineſſe of ſinne, which polluted the earth, with the waters of his rage, before this his iudgement was accordinglie executed, it was a hundred yeares before to his preacher *Noah* publiſhed. This his exceeding patience, and long ſufferance, argueth flatly his ſlacknes in puniſhing vs: For elſe he needed not to haue warned them at all, or reſpited them ſo long, but might haue ſoone ouerwhelmed them.

Gen.19 When his doome definitiue was denounced againſt Sodom, & her ſiſter Gomorrah, & her neighbor townes about, he came familiarly to *Abraham* before, & of ſet purpoſe broke the matter vnto him, that he might ſtay him by intreating for them. For to ſignifie ſo much he ſuffreth duſt and aſhes to diſ-

pute

pute with him, and so farre to commune and preuaile with him, as if there had beene but ten honest persons in the place, the rest had beene preserued and saued for their sakes. What proofe more pregnant can we haue then this, of the tẽder mercy and louing kindnes of the Lord?

Pharaoh was the rankest rebell that I reade of, for he spared not to say, *Who is the Lorde that I should let Israel go? I knowe not the Lorde, neyther will I let Israel go.* Woulde such a fellowe thinke you haue beene spared? Yet the Lorde did spare him, and warned him seuen times before hee would destroy him. Oh the exceeding bountie of our God towards vs. *Exod.14*

The Niniuits were a pestilent and peruerse people, out of measure sinfull, for the outcrie of their sinne had sent an Eccho vppe to heauen, and the Lord had presentlie decreed their destruction: but though the sworde was nowe drawne out of the sheath, to wound their hairie scalpe, yet so good a God was he, so slow to vengeance, and full of mercie, as their repentance mitigated his moode, and shut vp the sworde of his anger and iudgement againe into the scabberd. *Ionas:3*

By the Arke of the Testimonie wherein the law was kept, was the Mercie seate placed, to signifie that as soone as wee haue offended the lawe, there is mercie to bee had: *With the Lorde there is mercie* (sayth the Prophet *Dauid*) *and with him is plenteous redemption.* *Psal.130*

Now as he is thus backward & slow to anger: so The Lord

is swift in shewing mercy.

is hee as forward and prone to mercie. As hee but walketh when he punisheth a sinner, so he runneth when he would saue a sinner, as he did here to saue a notorious and miserable sinner.

Luke. 19

Christ meaning to diuert into *Zacheus* his house, or rather into his soule, and to make him of an Vsurer and lim of the diuell, a sonne of *Abraham*, and a child of God, he looketh vp to the fig tree whereon *Zachee* stood, and saith, *Zachee, come downe at once, and come quicklie vnto me.*

Ioh. 13

To *Iudas Iscariot* the thiefe and the traitor, when hee was plotting and compassing his treason, the Lord likewise said, *Iudas that which thou doest doe quicklie.* *Iudas* his treason was the worlds redemption, and therefore he was so ready, and greedie it should be finished.

Luke. 12

Else where he likewise speaketh to the same effect saying, I *must bee baptized with a baptisme, and howe am* I *grieued vntill it be ended?* This hee spake of his passion, the cuppe of our blessing, the earnest and price of our eternall saluation.

Acts. 2

When the holie Ghost in the daie of Penticost came vppon the Apostles, it came suddainly in a sounde from heauen, as of a rushing and mightie winde: It was in mercie to illuminate and sanctifie them, and that was the cause it came speedilie on them.

v. 61

The Prophet *Esaie* declaring the office of Christ in preaching the Gospell, sheweth that the subiect of this preaching is, to publish Gods readinesse to

pardon

pardon ſinners and his vnwillingnes to take iudgement of them. And to make proofe thereof hee compareth them together, and maketh his clemencie to be far greater, and of longer continuance towardes vs then his iuſtice. For hee reſtraineth his vengeance, and limiteth it to a daie, but hee extendeth his mercie infinitelie beyonde it, giuing a continuance of time vnto it, the ſpace of a yeere. For thus the ſpirit ſpeaketh. *To preach the acceptable yeere of the Lord, and the daie of vengeance of our God.* Iſai. 54

The ſame Prophet in an other place confirmeth the ſame doctrin moſt comfortablie vnto vs, when in the perſon of God himſelfe hee ſaith. A little while haue I forſaken thee, but with great compaſſion will I gather thee, for a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee, for a little ſeaſon; but with euerlaſting mercy haue I had compaſsion on thee, ſaith the Lord thy redeemer.

The due regard hereof breedeth no admiration, but it tendeth exceedinglie to our conſolation: for this is natural and proper vnto God, to be gracious and mercifull: it is a ſtrange worke to him, as the ſcriptures ſay of him to puniſh and ſhewe vengeance. Euen as a Painter when he hath elaboratelie finiſhed a picture, if ſo be he be conſtrained in regard of ſome faultes which he findeth in it, vtterlie to blot out and deface all his worke, hee is much grieued for it: ſo when God ſeeth manie defaults, and blemiſhes in vs, who are his workmanſhip & engrauen image, vpon whome he hath beſtowed A ſimilitude

uch

ſuch exceeding coſt, as varniſhing vs, and adorning vs with liuely colours, which muſt be reformed, for which cauſe he muſt marre that he hath made, and begin his worke anew, it cannot but bee grieuous and troubleſome vnto him.

A ſimilitude

If thou wouldeſt place a ſtone of great waight vppon the roofe of thine houſe, thou haſt neede of pullies & cables for to reare it: but if thou wouldſt throw it to the ground, thou needeſt doe nothing but let it fall from thee, for it will fall of his accord vnto the grounde: for naturallie heauie things doe tend downeward, as thoſe that are light do aſcend vpwarde. It is as naturall with God to ſhewe mercie to a ſinner, as it is for a ſtone that is heauie to fall downewarde, for the Sunne to ſhine, for the fire to burne, or anie other thing to performe his nature.

Wherefore thou readeſt euerie where in the hiſtorie of Chriſt of innumerable mercies which hee ſhewed vnto many, but thou readeſt not of his puniſhments inflicted vpon any but only at one time,

Ioan. 2

when hee made him a whip, and chaſed out of the temple ſuch impure copeſmates, as had too abhominably prophaned the temple. Was there euer any that intreated his mercy and did not obtaine it?

Le. 22

He healed graciouſly *Malchus* his eare, his profeſſed and ſworn enemie, then one of the furious & bloud thirſty ſouldiours who combined together, intending his deſtruction.

The murmuring Iſraelites exaſperated the Lord exceedingly againſt them, when as the ſpies returning

ning from Chanaan their tidings diſpleaſed them: for they ſo mutinouſly muttered againſt God, as they were threatned of him, that they ſhould not poſſeſſe the inheritance promiſed them, or enter into the lande: Yet after that, when the people were in armes, and prepared vnto battell, in the middeſt of iudgement the Lorde could not vtterlie forget mercie: hee is ſo naturallie diſpoſed to bee mercifull; and therefore both in anger and loue hee ſaieth vnto them, *Doe not aſcende vp, for I am not with you, leaſt yee fall before your enemies.* Num. 14
If he had not been with them, he would not ſo graciouſlie and louinglie haue warned them, that they ſhould not go vp, but would haue ſuffered them to fall vpon the ſword, and bee a pray vnto their enemies. Againe, if ſo be he had beene with them, and had not been angry with them, he would not haue ſaid ſo directly vnto them, I *am not with you.*

He was with them, and was not with them. He was not with them that they ſhould haue the conqueſt, & he was with them that they ſhould not be conquered. If the Lord be thus mercifull when men are ſo ſinful, it is thereby manifeſt that hee is ſoone ſatiſfied.

The foure beaſts which *Ezechiel* did ſee in a viſion had the faces of a Lion, & alſo of a man in the right ſide: to ſignifie vnto vs, ý as he looketh like a lion vpon a ſinner that cannot repent, vtterlie to deſtroy him, whileſt there is none to helpe him: ſo when a ſinner returneth from his ſinnes, and turneth vnto him, he hath the louing and kinde face Ezech. 1

of

of a man, and intreateth him familiarlie and kindlie as a man.

This father could not be more forwarde in fauor towardes this his loſt ſonne, then to looke out after him, and to caſt his eyes about to eſpie where hee might ſee him, and when he had happily ſeene him a far off, to hie out vnto him, to embrace him, to fall on his neck, and kiſſe him. Al theſe are good notes of good nature and affections: but when they do parley, and talke together, the zeale is admirable which he expreſſeth towards him. For he is ſo ſoon pleaſed, as no ſooner the ſonne beginneth to ſpeak but the bowels of the father are ſo preſentlie mooued, as hee ſuffereth him not to vtter all he meditated, for before he could come to this clauſe of his ſet ſpeech, *Make me one of thy hired ſeruauntes*, the father interrupteth him, and breaketh off his ſpeech, preuenting him graciouſlie with his bleſſings of goodnes, and granting infinitly more then he deſired.

Why God has ſo reade to ſhew his ſinner ſuch mercy.

The father in great wiſedome vſed this great ſpeede, becauſe his ſonnes eſtate and neede ſo required it. For when as a ſinner through anguiſh of ſinne, is in extremity as this ſinner was, hee hath neede of preſent comfort to preuent deſpaire, and ready encouragement to allaie the rage, and furie of his paſsions, which otherwiſe woulde bee verie dangerous vnto him. For this cauſe God vſeth no delay with ſuch, but immediatly vpon the forgiuenes of ſinnes, hee giueth therewithall the riches of his grace; there is no time betwixt them, but they

come

come both together.

The remiſſion of ſin, and the giftes of grace come together.

Before we can recouer our bodily health after a great ſickneſſe it is a long time: by little and little, and by degrees we leiſurely attaine it: for the body is not of that moment as the ſoule, therefore there is no ſuch vrgent neceſsitie of the preſent health of it: for by lingering and time it may do wel enough. It is otherwiſe with the ſoule which woulde languiſh with griefe, and conſume away through continuance of ſorrowe, and therefore it is neceſſarie it ſhould haue ſpeedie remedie, and therefore God giueth it. Our courſe is quite contrary, for we vſe all ſpeed to haue health of bodie, but we trifle awaie the time, and put off opportunitie, which is offered vnto vs for the health of our ſoule. O Ieſu! what poſting is there vnto the Phiſition vpon euerie complaint and grieuance of the bodie? any ſmal occaſion driueth vs to him. If we bee but a little abated of our ſleepe, or the edge of our ſtomackes but a litle blunted, wee muſt haue his aduiſe, and we muſt receiue ſome Apothecarie drugges to reſtore the ſame againe: But who doth complaine of his diſeaſed ſoule, and repaireth to a Preacher and heauenlie Phiſition to remoue his maladie? we are therein wholie diſtempered, and out of frame, and yet we feele not that. Aboundance of euil humors, ready to choake and quench the good ſpirit remaine within vs, and wee ſeeke not to purge them. We ſhould bee moued to care more for our ſoules, ſeeing God ſo careth for them, and not to think the time too ſoone for them, ſince that God himſelfe

in

in ſo great haſte helpeth them.

We are as ready to do that which is euill, as God is ready to do vs good.

Futthermore this readines of this father to doe vs good, ſhould be a ſpur to pricke vs forward, and to make vs as ready to good. But we oppoſitly are as bent to euill, as the Lord is graciouſly inclined vnto our good. If we imagine any wickednes, & would ſet forth vngodlineſſe, neither oares, ſailes, or winds can ſerue vs, wee are ſo hot and haſty to effect it. *Aaron* had not finiſhed and ended his ſpeech, before the Iſraelites had caſt him their iewels, their bracelets and earerings, and coſtly ornamentes to make a golden Calfe. They would not ſo readily like calfes as they were, haue beſtowed a peece of gold, as an almes to a poore man the liuing image of the euerliuing God: but they eſteemed not what they gaue vnto a blockiſh Idoll, to a dead image, the worke of mans hands which had no need of it.

I would that this were not our ſinne, and the names being changed we were not this people: we can beſtow waſtfully our gold vpon idle and laſciuious pictures, and anticke workes; we can ſtatelie ſet them out vppon tombes, vpon the gates of our houſes, in our gardens, and in euery corner of our dwellings, & they want no coſt on them: but deere Chriſtians their fellow ſeruants, the image of God for whom Chriſt Ieſus died, runne vp and downe, and doe lie at our doores pale and wan thorough hunger, naked, haborles, and in all extremity, and our eies behold them not, much leſſe do our hearts pitty them. How many be there who ſpare not for coſt to ſpende among whores, in the damnable

pleaſures

pleaſures of their ſinnes, which turne to their deſtruction: but will beſtowe nothing to godly vſes, in zealous affections, which may make to their ſaluation? The Prophet taxing our readineſſe to commit ſinne, ſaith, *We imagine miſchiefe in our beds.* To which purpoſe ſaith *Salomon. The feete of the wicked run vnto miſchiefe.* And *Hieremie* complaineth in the like ſort. *Euerie one turned to their race, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel.* Now contrariwiſe howe ſlacke and ſlowe wee are to ſerue God, I neede not to ſhewe, our actions and whole courſe of life ſheweth it. As we haue neede of a bit to draw vs backe from ſinne, ſo wee haue as much neede of a ſpur to pricke vs to God: for wee are as heauie and as dull in his ſeruice, as wee are nimble and pliable to the world. This did not *Dauid*, when as he ſaith thus. *I haue run the way of thy commandementes*: And *Paule* preſcribeth vs an other courſe, in exhorting vs ſo to run, as we may obtain. In a worldly race each one laboureth to outrun an other, to gaine a worldlie prize: let vs doe the like in regard of the rewarde that is ſet before vs, if wee doe thereafter, that wee may ſay with the Apoſtle. *I haue fought a good fight, I haue run my race, I haue kept the faith: from henceforth is laide vp for me a crowne of righteouſneſſe, which the righteous Lord ſhal giue vnto mee, and not to me only, but to al thoſe who loue his glorious comming.*

Prou. 1

Hierem. 8. 9

Pſal. 119

1. Cor. 9

2. Tim. 4

The

The fourth Chapter.

Of the other circumſtances of the Father his loue, ſhewed to his ſonne by his falling on his necke, and kiſſing him.

WHileſt wee doe conſider the Fathers kindnes ſhewed to his ſonne, we may ſay with holy *Dauid: Truly God is good to Iſraell, and to thoſe that be of a true hart*: yea to thoſe that are of a bad hart to, as this perſon was. For albeit we haue had good proofe of his good will by former arguments; yet there followe greater, who do more euidently declare and teach the ſame.

Among others, by theſe circumſtances and tokens of grace, *His falling on his necke, his kiſſing him*: the heate and fire of his affections breaketh out, and the light thereof ſhineth cleerely as the ſunne, and as the noone day vnto vs. And this wil the plainer appeare vnto vs, if wee turne our eyes vpon the habite of this ſonne, and viewe his preſent miſerable infelicity, being ſuch, as if naturall loue in the father had not ouercome it, it had bredde in him a loathſome deſpite and hatred of him. For he came no otherwiſe then as a common Rogue vnto him, all torne and beggarlie, in filthie and ſtinking maner, as he was in when hee was enkenneled in the ſties, and couched among ſwine. Certainely

his

his breath and whatſoeuer was of him was ranke and poiſonable as any vnclean carrion: he was no waie fit for humane ſocietie, yet his ſweete Father embraceth him in his armes, culleth and kiſſeth this vgly monſter with the ſweete kiſſes of his mouth.

This is our condition, and the loue of GOD our Father is the ſame towardes vs. For howe vilde doe wee appeare in the ſight of God, as wee are of our ſelues naked, miſerable, and to euerie good worke abhominable? we haue lyen among the pots, yea among the ſwine into wich the diuels entred, which violently were thrown from a ſteepe down place, and caried into the ſea: our garments are as menſtruous & polluted clouts, patched and pieced, which (as *Adams* aprō which he made him of fig leaues) cannot hide our nakednes, much leſſe beautifie and adorne our bodies: yet our deere father ſhutteth not his eies at ſuch a noiſom and horrible ſight, or ſtoppeth his noſtrils againſt ſuch a ranke and outragious ſent: but he claſpeth vs in his armes, and hideth vs in his boſome as an arrowe in the quiuer, and ſent down his own and only ſonne among vs, to waſh vs and make vs clean, to take away our filthines, that we might be preſented pure and holy vnto him. *Matt. 8*

In kiſsing him he declareth his entire loue vnto him, for a kiſſe among men hath alwaies gone currant for a pledge and pawne of kindneſſe, which is profeſſed by it. For becauſe by our mouthes we do drawe our ſpirits, and thereby doe vnfolde the ſecrets *A kiſſe a token of loue among men*

crets of our hearts, and do vtter our thoughts: by the outward ioining together of our mouthes, wee doe promise an agreement, and coniunction of hearts.

Gen.45 Hence it is that *Ioseph* when he opened, and reuealed himselfe vnto his brethren, and would poure out his loue in the greatest measure vpon them; among other notes and tokens thereof, hee affectionatly fel vpon their necks and kissed them.

Luke.7 *Mary Magdalen* the sinner, when shee was conuerted, to testifie her loue which shee did beare to Christ, shee did cast downe hir selfe at the feete of Christ, and most humbly kissed them.

Matt.26 When *Iudas* the traitour studied with himselfe what course might be the best to bring Christ vnto his death: he could not deuise a more subtil shift, then vnder a kisse, a pretence of kindnesse to couer his villany.

Cant.1 When as the church in the *Canticles* sueth to her spouse to shew his loue vnto hir, she intreateth her husband Christ that he would bee so fauourable as for to kisse her with the kisses of his mouth:, that is, that hee would manifest and declare his affections, by manefest and good tokens. The father therefore protesteth all loue and good wil vnto his son, and as a seale and confirmation of it, he bindeth and sealeth it vp with a kisse, so as now he may fully satisfie himselfe and make no doubt of it.

That which is here typically shrowded and shadowed vnder a parable, is plainly and substantially in euery one of vs verified: For this is gods behauior towards

towardes vs his lost children, whome vpon our returne he generally kisseth.

For doth not he most manifestly shewe his loue towardes vs as if he should kisse vs, when as his lips are so ful of grace, as he thus affectionately and graciously greeteth vs? *As I liue, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that hee doth returne and liue.* Ezech. 18 This is to be esteemed, as the kindest & most comfortable kisse, that may be giuen vnto vs: of the like sort is this comfort: *So God loued the worlde as hee gaue his only begotten son, that whosoeuer beleeueth in him should not perish, but haue life euerlasting.* Iohn. 3. And this: *This is my beloued sonne, in whome I am wellpleased heare him.* Matt. 3 As the father thus kisseth vs, so doth the sonne, that we might kisse him, least he be angry with vs. Psal. 2 Who doth not wonder at these gracious wordes which proceede from his mouth appertaining vnto all? *Come vnto me all ye that labour, and are heauy loaden, and I will ease you.* Matth. 11 To the same purpose serue the Sacraments of ỹ church, which are seuerall sweete kisses, and as it were the earnest 'peny, to confirme the couenant that God hath made vnto vs. And truly he ioineth himselfe closely vnto vs, and streightly embraceth vs, and as it were kisseth vs, when as by baptisme hee doth receiue vs into the lap of the church, incorporateth vs into his holy congregation, maketh vs the mysticall body of his sonne, espousing vs vnto him, and with him intituling vs vnto his blessed inheritance, purchased by his bloud in the kingdome of heauen.

The like he doth by the myſtical ſupper, by which we are inſtructed that hee is the ſame, who kiſſeth and cheriſheth vs, as ſuſtaining vs with his bleſſed bodie and bloud, which he gaue and ſhed for vs to ſaue and preſerue vs both bodies and ſoules vnto eternall life.

To theſe may be numbred all his kinds of benefits, which are ineſtimable and vnſpeakeable, of which there is no end, by all which he imbraceth vs with the armes of mercy, and kiſſeth vs with the kiſſes of his mouth.

It is our duty in regard of this to ſhew loue to him, who hath ſo loued vs, yea who hath loued vs when as we loued not him, who whileſt we were enemies hath vouchſafed to die for vs. Let his kiſſes therefore kindle our affections, and drawe vs on to kiſſe him againe, who is our loue, our doue, our beloued, our bridegroom, our ſauior. But how may we iuſtly be aſhamed of our ſelues, ẏ wee haue forſaken our own ſpouſe, & haue cõmitted filthines with ſtrãge fleſh? we haue wrought folly in Iſrael, and haue cõmitted fornication with the baude of Babilon, *who with her craft hath cauſed vs to yeeld, and with hir flattering lips hath enticed vs?* The whore of Rome hath bewitched our heartes: and hir painted face hath rauiſhed our affections. But take wee in time the aduiſe of ſage *Salomon*, and let vs prudently follow it, *Heare me now therefore O children, and harken vnto the words of my mouth. Let not thine hart decline to her waies, wander thou not in her paths, for ſhe hath cauſed many to fall down wounded, and*

Pro. 7

Pro. 7

the

the ſtrong men are all ſlaine by her. Hir houſe is the way vnto the graue, which goeth downe vnto the chambers of death.

The fift Chapter.

Of the Roiall robe, giuen by the father vnto the prodigal ſonne, when he was in preſence.

WE haue hitherto diſcuſſed diuers main pointes of rare and ſtrange fauour, ſhewed by the father to his ſonne a far off, and ſomewhat we haue ſpoken of his geſtures, and actions of loue towards him when he drew nigh vnto him: but now far greater remain to be intreated of, admirably expreſſed when hee was in preſenee with him.

Now had he fit time, and iuſtice required it, and his ſonnes ſinnes deſerued it, that he ſhould rip vp vnto him his defaults paſt, and cal to his remẽbrance the offences of his youth, to call him to account of the time miſpent, and to lay open the booke of conſcience before him.

Some ſeuere father if he had ſuch a ſonne, would haue ratled him roundly, and woulde haue either conſtrained himſelfe to ſeeme inexorable, or otherwiſe would not haue accepted of him, but vpon cõditions of amendment of maners, & of an abſolute obedience afterwards: But this father is ſo fatherlie, and ful of fauor, as he cannot giue himſelfe to rigor and auſterity, but aſſoone as he ſeeth him, his loue is

set on fire and burneth towards him, so as the coles that follow are kindled at it, for assoone as he hath him he most courteously entertaineth him: & graciously greeteth him with all louing kindnes,

Hee suffereth him not to conclude his speech, though he knew wel enough that he had not much to speake. He should haue spoken on, and saide as hee purposed, *Make mee one of thy hired seruants*, but the father interrupteth him by his hasty calling to his seruants for him, giuing more then hee himselfe would haue requested, or his mind conceiued. For immediatly while the words were in his mouth he imploieth all his seruants about him, to adorne and set him forth, and prouide a banquet for him.

He would thus cloath him, to shew vs what account he maketh of him, how highly hee honoreth him as his owne darling, though the other woulde haue sued to be but his hyreling.

His roabe what it was.

He willeth his officers to fetch him the best or the first roabe, and to adorne him with it. This first roabe was his first dignitie, which *Adam* lost, and Christ redeemed, *Innocency and holinesse, and the grace of God*, with the which he was first cloathed, wherby he was cloathed like vnto the sun in beauty and brightnes.

With this roabe was *Adam* first inuested, but by his wilful departure from his father, he was stripped of it: So as we his sonnes who do treade in his steps, are subiect to his miseries, and may with him bee ashamed of our nakednes.

Christ is our roabe.

But God in his Christ, to vs his prodigall conuer-

ted

ted sonnes hath restored vs our robe: for hee is the garment which we must put on, according to that which the Apostle *Paule* saith, *Put yee on the Lord Iesus Christ*. Hee is the wedding garment mentioned in the gospel, without which wee may not presse vnto the heauenly banquet. Rom 13 Matt. 22

His righteousnes in vs, is the garment of our elder brother, by which we must attaine the blessing of our father, as *Iacob* by putting on the garment of *Esau*, obtained the blessing of his father *Isaack*. This is he vpon whom the kingly harper diuinelie descanteth in this dainty ditty. *O my God, thou art exceeding glorious, thou art cloathed with maiestie and honor*. In him behold the great wonder in heauen, a woman cloathed with the sunne. If so bee therefore we doe weare his cloth, and become his seruants, if we put on his merits and obedience, our sinnes shall be couered, and our nakednes shall bee no more seene. Psal. 104 Reuel. 12

Wherefore bestow thou no more labor vpon the olde rags which *Adam* hath left thee. Sowe no longer paultry fig leaues, and rotten pieces together, for thy paines will be lost, and it will not acquite the cost, which thou bestowest on them. It happeneth sometime that a poore creature hath a garment so olde, and spent with wearing, as if it take a rent, it cannot be stitched vp, for the threads doe breake asunder, they are so rotten and decaied with vse, as they are not firme enough to sustaine a newe thread or to beare a needle: so our robe of rebellion which wee doe carrie A similitude

about vs, hath beene worne so bare by our ancient and long continuance in sinne, as there is no repairing it, but wee must leaue it as beggars doe their
1. Cor. 1 rags, and cast it vpon the hedge, and wee must put on a new garment euen Iesus Christ *Our wisdom, iustification, sanctification and redemption.* For he is, as *Chrysost.* very wel doth say vnto the peo-
Chrysost. ad pop. Antiochenum, hom. 21 ple of Antioch, all in all vnto vs, our table, our house, our garment, our head, our roote. To this
Rom. 6 ende doth *Paule* say, Whosoeuer bee baptized in Christ must put on Christ, as hee is raised vp from the deade, by the glory of his father, so wee also should walke in newnesse of life: nowe we put on
Ambrose. Christ Iesus by a liuely faith, and doe weare him about vs, euen as *Stephen* beeing in earth touched him in heauen.

2. Tim. 4 This is to bee diligently obserued of vs, and the rather bicause there are erroneous spirits, wholy led by the doctrine of Diuels, who do bumbast themselues with their owne righteousnes destroying that righteousnes which is by faith.

Reuel. 3 They do but flatter and deceiue themselues with a vain opinion of that which is not in them, as the *Laodicias* who the spirit taxeth saying, *Thou saiest I am rich and increased with goods, & haue need of nothing, & knowest not how thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, and naked. I counsaile thee to buy of me gold tried by the fire that thou maiest bee made rich, and white raiment that thou maiest be cloathed, and that thy filthy nakednesse do not appeare.*

Such as go strouting, & ietting about bragging

of their workes, are like vnto the ſouldiours againſt whom in times paſt king *Ageſilaus* did fight in battell: who beeing the leaneſt and moſt carionlie creatures which the worldes eye coulde ſee, they quilted and emboſſed the quarters of their garments with huge flappes and borders, to appeare huge and mightie to terrifie their enemies; but after they were vanquiſhed and ſlaine in the field, and ſtripped of theſe veſtments, their lanke and thinne ſides appeared to their viewe, and the enemie ſcorned them: So if we diſrobe iuſticiaries, and meritmongers of their bragging borders, of their conceited and counterfeit righteouſnes, and lay them naked to the eye of the worlde, they will appeare the moſt apiſh and ridiculous perſons as anie one can beholde. It is vanitie to ſooth and pleaſe our ſelues in that which we ought to bee aſhamed of: for the wages of our merits is death. We are borne *Pſal.* 50 in ſinne, and conceiued in iniquitie, ſaith the kinglie Prophet. I feared all my workes, ſaith that iuſt *Iob.* 9 man Iob. The ſtarres in Gods ſight are vncleane, much more a vilde man, ſaith the ſame ſaint. If wee conſider our owne merits wee muſt deſpaire, ſayth the auncient father *Hierome*. Hee that truſteth not *Iob.* 25 to his good workes, nor hopeth with himſelfe by his workes to be iuſtified, he hath onelie the hope of ſaluation, and the mercies of the Lord, ſayth reuerend *Baſil. Being iuſtified by faith wee haue peace with God, through our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, as the holie Ghoſt teacheth vs.* Wherefore let vs with the foure and twentie Elders, ſpoken of in the Apoca- *Hieron. in 6 Eſay.* *Baſilius.* *Reuel.* 4

lips,

lips, Take off the Crownes from our heads, and lay them downe at the feete of the Lambe. Whatsoeuer worke we do, let vs lay it at the feete of Christ, who woorketh in vs as *Paule* teacheth, who speaking of his labours that they exceeded others, he stoppeth and correcteth himselfe, saying, *Not I, but the grace of God in me.* We are of our selues as the prodigall sonne verie poorelie, and filthily attyred. It is God the father in his dear sonne, who clotheth vs in costly and imbrodered garments, with a vesture of gold, wrought about with diuerse colours. Wherefore giue glorie to God, my sonne, as *Iosua* said to *Achan*, and boast not of thy selfe.

Iosue. 7

The sixth Chapter.

Of his ring and shooes which were giuen vnto him

AS he richly araieth him with a royall robe, so he further graceth him, adorning him with a ring. This ring serued for a signet and seale of the couenant and last will which hee maketh with him; namely, that hee would become his God, and hee should bee numbred among his people, that he would be his father, and hee should be his sonne: hee would cancell his former wickednesse, and would not remember his sins any more. And no other end doth *Augustine* make of it, whē he tearmeth the ring, *Pignus spiritus sancti*, the pledge and earnest of the holie Ghost.

ugust quæst. in. quæst.

The

The vse of rings hath been very ancient, for *Moses* in *Genesis* maketh mention of a ring, which *Iudas* gaue to *Thamar*, as a token of his loue.

Rings serue especiallie to a double purpose. First to bee as ornaments of honour and renowne. For which cause in olde times the Romanes when they sent their honourable Embassadours into forraine kingdomes, they had rings giuen them in the publike sight and face of the people, which serued as testimonials of their honorable callings, and of the dignitie and great worship which was layde vpon them. It was not then lawfull for anie to weare rings who had them not by publique commission giuen vnto them. Of later times a *Ring* peculiarlie appertayned to the famous order and degree of knighthoode, to distinguish them from the confused and common sort of people. It was not sufferable in a base borne brat, to go bragging with a ring, no man might weare any that was not free borne. Moreouer it was not permitted to any to haue more then one, yea it was infamous & verie ridiculous to weare more then one. *Gracchus* noted *Nauius* for a wanton fellow of most effeminate behauiour, forasmuch as his left hand was so painted and gawdie, and daubed with rings. It was alwayes the custome to weare the ring vpon the next finger vnto the least vpon the left hande, to bee in steade of a Diademe and Coronet vpon the toppe of the hart, the fountaine of all vertue, for asmuch as a sinewe from thence extendeth it selfe vnto the heart, and therefore that the Ring was a

A ring an ornament of honour.

signe

signe of vertue this ancient custome sheweth.

A Ring a seale of loue

Secondlie, rings serued as seales of loue, and pledges of troth plighted each with other. In this respect it hath beene the common custome of louers, to declare their mutuall loue and good will, by their ioynt giuing and receiuing of rings. Their agreement of mindes, and fitnes of natures, by no other ceremonie could bee better shewed then by a ring, which euerie one causeth to be made fit before it can be worne, for if it be too wide it slippeth off, or if it bee too streight it pincheth too much: So consorts and companions of our loues must be fit and sutable to vs. For if they bee too loose, they will bee too slippery, or if they be too streight, wee cannot endure them.

These Rings which passed to and fro betweene louers, vsually were engrauen, and had seales vpon them. Such emblemes and poesies, as might seeme to stirre vppe affections the better, and continue kindnesse were carued vpon them. But vnto such pride and generall excesse are these times of ours come, as euerie triobuler and meanest mate will flant it with a ring. He is no bodie now adayes who cannot if a massie and waightie ring will doe it, out dare a man. You shall see such sordide and abiect fellowes carrie ringes vpon their fingers, as there is no wise man that knoweth them, that doth not iudge that rings are fitter and seemlier for their feete. You shall haue a doltish fellow iette vp and downe with a great seale ring, who neither knoweth one letter from another, neither hath at anie time

time any letter for to seale.

But this man howsoeuer he now seemeth base in respect of this his former beastly behauior, for to weare a ring, yet the father not without good discretion adorneth him with it: for howsoeuer latelie he was in disgrace, yet was he at the first of verie great account. Hee descended from a noble and princelie pedegree. Hee was of the greatest birth and parentage as possiblie could be. God not onelie giueth grace vnto a sinner that repenteth him of his sinnes, but with his grace restored whatsoeuer he had lost by reason of his sinne. He is carefull of our credite, estimation, and account in the middest of our sorrowes, as of *Iacobs* in the middest of his seruice and labours in Mesopotamia, of *Iosephs* in prison and miserie in Egypt, of *Dauids* whilest he was in verie meane estate, when he kept his fathers sheepe, whom he tooke from the sheepfold, and preferred and extolled vnto the kingdom of Israel.

Gen.32
Gene.41
1.Sam.16
1.Sam.17

Why then doe wee slacke and delay our repentance, since we haue so liberall and bountifull a father, who so plentifullie rewardeth the good deer? Would we that are filthie be rather filthie still, then to be made cleane? Had we rather be bonde then free: seruants then sonnes: base then honourable: to goe in vilde rayment, and appeare abhominable, then to bee apparelled richlie, and to bee set foorth with a ring honourablie? Wherefore goe thou out of the denne of thy sinne, since thou seest what blessings God hath in store for thee vppon thy

A similitude

thy forth comming . The Conie that concheth closely in the burrow, though he durst nor stirre, or issue out at the noyse and clamour and knocking of the warrener, it is not to be maruailed at; for hee knoweth well inough that if he springeth out, hee shall be entangled and catched with a net, which is ouerspred for him, and therefore he rather chooseth to bee woaried of the Ferret, and to bee torne in peeces by him, then to runne himselfe into such certaine danger otherwise. But there is no such matter to be feared of thee, by thy comming out of the caue of thy sinne wherein thou dost lurk when the Lord calleth thee: but be thou wel assured, that when thou obeyest the voyce of the Lord, and commest vnto him, hee will embrace thee with his armes, he will kisse thee, and receiue thee, and bestow his rich graces on thee.

His shooes.

But as he doth credit and grace him with a ring as a token of his dignitie, that he is the son of God; so he prepareth shooes for him, that his feet might be as harts feet to run the way of his commaundements, that the man of God might bee readie, and prouided vnto euerie good worke.

That the Iewes might be in readinesse to celebrate the Passeouer, according to Gods ordinance, they were commanded to haue shooes vpon their feete, immediately to depart after it was consummated.

Mark. 10

When our sauiour Christ sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, hee willeth them that they be shod with Sandals.

The

The great Doctor of the Gentiles laying out euery parcell of the complete armor of a Christian soldiour, who will fight a good fight, giueth him this furniture and munition for his feete, charging him that they be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Ephes. 6

By his feete, that were couered & defended with shooes, we may fitly and safely vnderstand his affections, & his whole course of life which dependeth thereupon: for as the feet doe beare vp the bodie, and carie it to and fro whither they list; so all our actions are carried by our affections, and are ruled by their fancies.

This much our Sauiour Christ doth insinuate by his washing his Apostle *Peters* feete, and by his replication and answer vnto *Peter* when as he refused it saying vnto him. *If I wash thee not thou shalt haue no part with me.* Ioh 13 For indeede all our actions, and endeuours are so filthie and vncleane in his sight, partly through our naturall most sinfull corruption which bringeth foorth in vs all sordid and vilde lusts; partlie through the custom & condition of the worlde, which beeing wholie set vpon euill, enticeth vs to filthinesse, and that with greedinesse, as vnlesse Christ washeth vs, by giuing vnto vs a cleane heart, and renuing his holie spirit in vs, by regenerating vs with water, and the holy Ghost, wee can neuer enter into the kingdome of heauen. Nowe because there is none so cleansed from the filth of sinne, but that he is daylie defiled againe with it, For as they who doe enter into a bathe, A similitud

and

and do waſh their whole bo dies, if they doe but touch the ground with their feete, they doe ſo pollute them, and beray them anew as they haue need of a newe waſhing: ſo wee beeing cleanſed from our ſinnes by Chriſt, and iuſtified by his grace, we preſently ſet our affections vpon earth, and defile our ſelues againe with our ſinfull workes, ſo as it is moſt needfull that our feete ſhoulde alwayes bee purified and made cleane. This is done by the preaching of the worde, which guideth our feete aright in the workes of his lawes, and wayes of his commaundements, and ordereth our goinges that our footſteps may not ſlide.

A three fold grace.

Thus the father conferred a threefolde grace vpon his graceleſſe ſonne. His preuenting grace, his following grace, his finiſhing and perfitting grace. He preuented him with his grace when hee ſaw him firſt, and eſpied him aloofe off, when as he ſaw not him: when he ſhewed mercie on him, and did runne vnto him, and graciouſlie did fall vppon his necke and kiſſed him. Of this grace the Apoſtle Paul ſpeaketh when as hee ſayeth, *Hee ſeparated mee from my mothers wombe, and called me by his grace.* Gala. 1

He followed him with his grace, when he cauſed ſhooes to be put vpon his feete, preparing him, and enabling him to walke in his wayes, drawing his feete out of the nette, out of the pit of mire and clay, and bringing them into a large roome, and finallie guiding them in the way of peace. Of the ſame grace ỹ ſame apoſtle ſpeaketh likewiſe thus.

I haue laboured more then all, not I, but the grace of God in me. 1.Cor.15

Of his finishing grace we shall intreate in the next Chapter, which is shewed by the banquet, myrth and musicke which was prouided for him. And this is that whereof the same Apostle *Paul* speaketh in this maner: *It is God that worketh in vs to will and to performe.* Phil. 2

By this mans ornaments we are taught how we are to be cloathed, if we bee his children, and bee with him conuerted from our former sinnes. We must go arayed with the wedding garment of holinesse of life, of puritie of conscience: Euery one of vs must bee as the Poet sayth: The marks of those y are truly conuerted.

Integer vitæ, scelerisq; purus.

We must haue the ring and earnest of the spirit, wherby we are sealed vnto the day of redemption.

Thirdly and lastly, wee must haue shoes vpon our feete, whereby we may walke without offence in our seuerall callings wherein God hath placed vs: by these we shall be knowne whether wee bee true or counterfeit professors.

The seuenth Chapter.

Of the banquet, myrth, and musicke wherewith the father welcommed his sonne.

THe father dooth followe his sonne with such fauour, as is straunge and admirable. Hee had abundantly declared his

affections by his former mercies, but yet that which followeth exceedeth all the reſt. For it is ſuch, as I ſuppoſe our dull ſenſes are not able to conceiue, the tongue of men or Angels in no wiſe can expreſſe. Wherefore being to enter into this huge Ocean ſea of celeſtiall ioyes, which the righteous lord prepareth for repentant ſinners, who do truly turne to him, I faint with *Peter* when hee walked vpon the ſea, and I crie out with *Peter, Saue me maiſter leaſt I periſh.*

Matth. 13

Is it a ſmall thing (ſaith *Dauid*) to be the kings ſonne? What am I? and what is my life, or my familie of my father in Iſrael, that I ſhould be ſonne in lawe to the King? Much ſurely muſt be done vnto the man whom the king will honour, for, for him muſt bee brought royall apparell which the king vſeth to weare, and the horſe that the King rideth vpon, and the crowne royall muſt bee ſet vpon his head, the rayment and the horſe muſt be deliuered by the hande of one of the kinges moſt noble princes, as ſaith *Haman* to king *Ahaſhuroſh*. This honour hath beene ſhewed to this deſpiſed perſon, as to another *Mordecai*, the royall robe by the kings moſt noble princes his holie miniſters hath beene put vpon him. The crowne imperiall is now beſtowed vpon him, now is there triumph, feaſting, and reioycing in the lande of the liuing. When as *Haman* was in his magnificence and proſperitie, and was inuited vnto the kings table, he could not refraine boaſting, hee muſt needes call his wife and friendes togither to publiſh it vnto them:

1. Sam. 18

Eſther. 7

Eſther. 5

them: wee haue iuſt cauſe to boaſt our ſelues of our felicitie, that God hath prepared a table for vs in deſpite of our enemies, and we haue receyued the cup of ſaluation, and he maketh vs now to heare of ioy and gladnes, that the bones which hee hath broken might reioyce.

This banquet heere mentioned, is not ſimply and groſſie to be taken, but it is ſpirituallie to be vnderſtoode. For we muſt not ſo baſelie thinke of the ioyes of the worlde to come, as to place them among the carnal and fleſhly delights of this preſent euill world. Here is another meate then you are aware of, as Sauiour Chriſt ſayth. *The kingdome of God is not meate or drinke, but righteouſneſſe and peace and ioy in the holie Ghoſt.* There is no neede of meate and drinke in heauen, for wee can die no more, foraſmuch as we ſhall bee like vnto the Angels, as Chriſt tolde the Sadduces. Wherefore let vs not groſſie bee conceyued and deceyued with *Mahomet*, who was the firſt that preſcribed lawes to the Turkes and Saracens: whoſe God was his bellie, whoſe lawes were his luſts, who was carnallie minded. Chriſt promiſeth to ſuch who abide with him, and continue in temptations, that they ſhall haue a kingdome, and that they ſhall eat and drinke at his table in his kingdome. But this and ſuch like ſpeeches are figuratiue, and borowed, and are taken from the vſe and practiſe of princes, who they vſe, whom they vouchſafe moſt of all to honour, to call vnto their Tables, and prepare banquets for them. *Iohn. 6* *Luke 22*

This feast is therefore his honour and renowne which his father giueth him: and thereby hee signifieth nothing else but his vnfained loue towardes him. The children of this world can by no better meanes expresse the ioyes which at any time they conceyue, then by making of a feast, and therefore when they haue most occasion of gladnesse, they doe call their friendes togither, and do feast among themselues. This feast is therefore the fathers ioy, which hee conceyueth for his sonnes safe returne, and it is a token of the greatest ioy that his sonne can be partaker of.

The meaning then of this place is, that his sonne doth now enioy all honour and felicitie, hee is now satisfied, to vse the wordes of the kinglie Prophet, when his glorie doth appeare. This table is heauenlie happinesse, and the pleasant Nectar, and Ambrosia therof, is ioy without sorrow, health without sickenesse, strength without weaknes, and life without death. In comparison wherof al worldlie ioy is heauines, al sweetnes sowrenes, all prosperitie most miserable infelicitie. This is that Table which our Sauiour Christ preacheth of saying: I goe to prepare a place for you, and when I am gone and haue prepared you a place, I will come againe and take you vnto my selfe, that where I am there may you be also. Whereunto also answereth this his other saying. Father, I will that those whome thou hast giuen mee bee with mee, that they may see my glorie which thou hast giuen mee, because thou hast loued me before the foundation

Psal. 17

Ioh. 14

Ioh. 17

dations of the world were layd.

Vnder the fat Calfe, he comprehendeth the whole course and worke of our saluation: for this fat Calfe is Christ, who is fat in deede, inasmuch as his father had set him vp in his eternall counsell before the worlde was made, to be the tender and most sweete foode of our eternall life. He is meate indeed vnto vs, and is whatsoeuer can bee set before vs. He is the lambe of God which taketh away the sinnes of the world, and our Passeouer which is offered vp. He is that newe wine, which beeing put into newe vessels, refresheth and maketh glad the heart of man. He is the bread that came downe from heauen, which nourisheth them, who do feed of him in faith vnto eternall life. He is the fountaine of liuing water, of which whosoeuer drinketh shall not thirst anie more. And what is he not else? He is the waie by which wee enter into the heauenlie marriage. Hee is the light which dispelleth darknes, which like the clowdie Pillar which went before the Israelits, giueth vs light in the night season, and guideth vs in the path and way that wee should walke. Finallie, he is made of his father, Wisdom, Iustification, Sanctification and redemption. In him the fulnes of the Godheade bodilie dooth dwell. In him is our righteousnesse, our peace, our ioy in the holie Ghost.

Iohn. 1 1. *Cor.* 5. *Mat.* 9 *Iohn* 6 *Iohn.* 4 *Iohn.* 14 *Iohn.* 18 1. *Cor.* 1 *Col.* 2 *Rom.* 14

To this purpose sayth reuerend *Chrysostom*, notablie well, Christ is become all things for thee, thy Table, thy garment, thy house, thy heade, and thy roote. To whome consenteth *Origen*, saying:

Chrysost. ad pop. Antioch. hom. 21

Orig. in Exo. ca. 15. hom. 7 *Verbum dei, & caro dicitur, & panis, & lac, & holera.* The word of God is called fleſh, and bread, and milke, and hearbes. Anſwerable hereunto is this of *Nazianzen.* Our Lord Ieſus Chriſt is called the life, the way, the bread, the wine, the true light, and a thouſand things elſe, ſo is hee alſo called the ſworde. *Origen* ſayth, *Appellatur panis vitæ, vt habeat guſtus animæ quod deguſtet.* Hee is called the breade of life, that the ſoule maie haue whereupon to feede. Oh let vs therefore returne from our ſinnes, and come home vnto our father, that wee may taſte howe ſweete the Lorde is. By him alone are our hungrie ſoules fedde, and by nothing elſe. Whatſoeuer meate is dreſſed by any other Cooke, and miniſtred vnto vs, it is not nouriſhable, but poyſonable vnto vs. For they ſell that which is not breade, as *Eſay* witneſſeth, and they ſerue vs with that which is not able to ſatiſfie vs. But in Chriſt wee haue whatſoeuer wee can wante, All thinges are ours, as the Apoſtle ſayth. So that wee may ſay with *Dauid*, *The Lorde is my ſhepheard, therefore I can want a thing.* And with *Paule*, *Bleſſed bee God, euen the father of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed vs with all ſpirituall bleſſinges in heauenlie things in Chriſt. For how can it be but that hee who hath giuen his owne ſonne for vs, ſhould not alſo giue to vs all things with him?*

Hom. 2. in Cantica.

Eſay. 55

1. Cor. 3

Pſa. 13

Ephes. 4

Rom. 8.

To this feaſting is adioyned all melodie and reioycing, which hath another vnderſtanding, as the former. For thereby the true ioy of penitent ſinners aſwell

aſwell in this life as in the life to come is verie plainlie meant.

The Saints of God doe reioyce in their beds as the Prophete *Dauid* ſayeth. *For beeing iuſtified through fayth, they haue peace towards God, and therefore they haue ioy alſo in afflictions.* This is true ioy in deede, and all other ioy is counterfeite in reſpect of this. For ioy is aunſwerable to deſire, as reſt is vnto motion: When there is nothing more to bee deſyred, our ioy muſte bee perfect. Nowe in heauen all our deſires are obtayned, yea more then wee can deſire. For the eye hath not ſeene, the eare hath not heard, and the heart of man can not conceyue, what God hath layde vppe in ſtore for thoſe that loue him.

No maruell then it was that *Iohn* the *Baptiſt* did ſpring ſo for ioy in his mothers wombe, and *Anna* the mother of *Samuel* ſingeth thus ſecretlie in her ſoule to God: *My hart reioyceth in the Lord, my horne is exalted in the Lord.* *Luke 1*

Euerie mans marriage day is ioyfull vnto him, and is celebrated with gladneſſe: much more muſt ioy and gladneſſe bee in the dwellings of the righteous when they are conuerted from their ſinnes to God. A ſimilitude

Trees when they firſt budde, and are arrayed with leaues and bloſſomes of ſundrie colours, are louelie to behold: ſo when a ſinner that hath beene deade through ſinne, beginneth to conuert, and to ſhew the bloſſoms and firſt fruits of amendment of A ſimilitude

life, he is moſt delightfull. But of this ſubiect wee ſhall more particularly and largelie diſcourſe in the laſt Chapter.

The eight Chapter.

Of the ioy which God conceiueth of a ſinners repentaunce, conſidered in the ioie and triumph that is made vpon the returne of the prodigal ſonne.

AS the Father maketh great ioie, and triumph vpon his ſonnes returne, ſo good occaſion moueth him thereunto.

As he is all wiſdome, ſo hee doth nothing raſhly, but with great diſcretion. *His ſonne was loſt and is now found: he was dead, and is aliue againe.* It agreeeth therefore with his goodnes and mercie to bee glad thereof.

It is the nature and propertie of God, to bee gracious and mercifull: as hee is ſorrowfull of a ſinners death; ſo is he as ioifull of the other ſide of his life. Hee weepeth for mans deſtruction, as when hee drowned the firſt world with water, and deſtroyed the people of Ieruſalem with y ſword: So he reioiceth of mans ſaluation, as it is ſhewed by three parables in this preſent Chapter, of the ſheepe, the groate, the prodigall ſon, all which do tend to one and the ſame effect, as *Pharao* his ſundry dreames of the kine, and eares of corne.

Genes. 7

Luke. 19

Gen. 41

It

If there bee some earthly iudges, who are so tender hearted, as beeing to denounce the definitiue doome of death, against notorious lewde prisoners standing at the bar, they cannot refraine weeping when as they publish it: truly no maruaile if such a God haue we, who when he is to execute iudgement and iustice against enormous sinners, hee is mooued exceedingly and with griefe doth punish them. A similitude

He is as a painter, loath to put out the faire image which hee hath made. With the carefull huswife, hee woulde finde his lost groate, euen vs who are his coine, and haue the image and superscription of *Cæsar* engraued vpon vs. *Will God the death of a sinner? As I liue* (saith God) *I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that hee repent and liue.* A similitude Ezech. 18

There be some hangmen who beeing to cut off a leg, or an arme of a lewd traitour, are grieuously affected in their minds at the doing of it, especially if he bee such a one as had beene his friende. God is our friend, yea he is our father: he cannot therefore cut vs off that are sinners, but sore against his will, with sorrow he must do it. When as hee shall come to condemne this euill worlde, the heauens and heauenlie creatures, shall put on mourning garmentes: A similitude

The Sunne shall bee eclipsed, the Moone shall be obscured, all the earth shall be blacke and darke round about, to testifie how that not without great mourning God our father doth condemne vs. In

like

like ſort whenſoeuer a ſinner is reclaimed from his vilde wayes, and reconciled vnto God, there is great reioycing among the Saints in heauen for it. Now becauſe the ioy which God conceiueth therupon being ſimplie conſidered, as it is in deede, exceedeth our capacities, and cannot be expreſſed: the ſpirit here condiſcendeth vnto our weaknes, ſpeaking groſſelie after the manner of men, alluding vnto the cuſtome and condition of our tymes, vnder the myrth vſed at our ſolemne feaſtes, ſhadoweth it vnto vs. It is our faſhion when as our ſucceſſe aunſwereth our deſires, and our affayres fall out luckilie, to prepare a feaſt and banquet for our friendes, to impart to them our ioy, beeing ſo rauiſhed with it as wee can no longer hide it: Such is God his ioy of a ſinners true repentance, as becauſe he cannot conceale it to himſelfe, he maketh the muſicall Inſtruments to ſounde it, his friends and louers round about are conuented, and made acquainted with it.

dg. 16 As the Philiſtines when they had attached *Samſon*, and had him in ſafe cuſtodie, the Princes and people were generallie aſſembled, a banquet was prouided, a mutuall triumph and reioycing was celebrated: ſo when as God taketh holde of a ſinner, and hath him in his keeping, he calleth his Angels, his hoſt of heauen togither, and with them ſolemnizeth this his ioy and gladnes, with a moſt melodious meeting.

nilitude A good Captaine when one of his fugitiue ſouldiours retyreth, and fiercelie and venturouſlie aſſaulteth

aſſaulteth the enemie, and ſtandeth to it valiantlie, hee can not but bee glad and verie ioyfull of him: Our grande Captaine *Ioſua* Ieſus Chriſt, when as wee retyre vnto his bande againe, vnto the vnitie of the Church, and doe fight againſt ſinne our deadlie enemie, hee cannot blotte our names out of his Booke beeing entred therein; but hee will graciouſlie giue vs his hande, welcome vs, and giue vs all ioyfull entertainment. For commonlie ſuch as haue beene moſt ranke and horrible ſinners, if once they doe take a hatred of ſinne, and conceyue a taſte howe ſweete the Lorde is, and doe returne to him, they growe more zealous and hote in religion then anie other elſe. They looke backe with *Miriam*, vnto the filthie Frogges and plagues of Egypt, vnto the filthineſſe of their former liues, and to Gods iudgements vpon ſuch wickedneſſe, and they praiſe God with the beſt members that they haue.

A plowman more regardeth a plot of grounde which hath bin repleniſhed, & ouergrowne with thornes, and at laſt becommeth fruitfull, thē he wil of that which neuer did beare thornes, and yet was neuer fruitfull: hee whoſe ſoule hath heretofore brought foorth the briers and thornes of vnſatiable luſt, and all kinde of wickednes, is much euery way accounted of, of God, if at the length his ſoule become good ſoile, & he bringeth forth good herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, aboue him that laieth waſte and is vtterlie vnprofitable, albeit heretofore he hath not beene ſo hurtfull. A ſimilitude *Heb. 6*

As

A similitude

As the hard iron when it is made red hote, is of a fiercer heat then the billet or coale can be made, be it neuer so red hot, because y the colder the substance is before, and more contrarie to the fire, the hoter it is after when it is set on fire, and ouercome with the force of it: so an obdurate and hard sinner if the fire of Gods grace taketh hold of him, he is more feruent and hote in spirite then the softer conscience, because the colder he was before, and more aduerse to God, the contrarie qualitie when it is predominant and ouercommeth the contrarie, maketh his heate and feruor more exceeding. Of this we haue verie many examples, as of *Dauid*, *Marie Magdalen*, *Peter*, *Paul*.

This ioy should rather of right appertaine to the sonne then to the father, for his was the glorie, gain, and commoditie, it made not to Gods benefite. It is not his profite, but our obedience, we doe but our durie when we returne to him. he hath no neede of himselfe of our conuersion. For it cannot be said as it was heretofore of the Asse and the Colt, that the Lord hath need of vs. It was not *Dauids* benefite to be married to *Abigael*, but it was her great blessing: as it is ours to bee married to our Christ. Yet the father so infinitlie loueth vs, as our good he accounteth his good, and therefore hee cannot but reioyce for our good.

The whole Trinitie reioyceth in vnitie at our conformitie. The father reioyceth because by our repentance he getteth more sonnes whom he may make princes in all landes. The sonne is glad, because

cauſe our repentance maketh his death fruitful and his precious red blood not to bee ſpilt in vaine for vs. The holy Ghoſt triumpheth and maketh boaſt hereof, becauſe by our conuerſion his horne is exalted, his temple in which he may dwell is enlarged, & made farre more beautifull then the temple of ỹ Iewes, which was called beautiful, for he hath therby members which he may quicken, & veſſels which he may ſtill fill ful of ỹ oile of his holy grace. It behoueth vs then much more to reioice & care for our ſelues, ſeeing the whole Trinitie ſo exceedingly reioyceth and careth for vs. Doubtleſſe, by continuing ſtil in our vilde ſinnes, we offer vnto the Trinitie exceeding wrong, when as wee depriue them of this their ioy, and we grieue too much the holy ſpirit of God, by which we are ſealed vnto the day of redemption. The Lord therefore giue vs his grace to turne from our ſins, to make God ioyfull of it. For by his ioy we ſhall haue all ioy, for in his ioy is eternall ioy and glorie for euer.

The ninth Chapter.

Wherein is ſhewed by the preſent eſtate of the prodigall ſonne, howe God mingleth proſperitie with aduerſitie.

WHen the ſorrowes of the prodigall ſons heart were enlarged, and he ſayde in his ſoule, Oh when wilt thou comfort mee? then the Lord declared his ſal-

uation

uation, and his mercie did he openlie ſhewe in the ſight of the people. Deſpaire not therefore O ſinner, of the louing kindneſſe of thy God, neither fall thou vnder the burden and heauy weight of thy afflictions, for God caſteth down & raiſeth vp again, hee taketh the ſimple out of the duſt, and the poore out of the mire, that he might ſet them among the princes, euen the princes of his people. As God departeth frō a ſinner for to humble him: ſo hee returneth againe vnto a ſinner to haue mercie on him. It is Gods maner to temper and mingle aduerſitie with proſperitie, and proſperitie with aduerſitie. He hath two ſtrings to his bow, if one will not ſerue an other muſt. But hauing ſufficientlie tamed his ſonne with the ſorrowe of the one, hee now forthwith refreſheth him againe with the comfort of the other.

God doth not vtterlie caſt off his children, and forſake his inheritance. But when the time commeth that they return to him he returneth to them, and bringeth all ioy with him.

God forſaeth not his aduerſity

When as God ordained in the olde lawe, diuerſe ſet ſeaſons to be conſecrated vnto feaſting, hee preciſelie charged, that the firſt and latter day ſhoulde be more ſolemne and ioyfull then the reſt. In the beginning of our conuerſion, and in the ende of our perfection, the Lord doth miniſter vnto vs greater gladnes. Wee haue peace of conſcience, and ioy in the holie Ghoſt vppon our true repentance in this preſent life, and in our perfect conſummation and bliſſe wee ſhall enioy all honour and felicitie in the

Exod. 22 vers. 28

life

life that is to come. Be our afflictions neuer ſo grieuous, and come vnto extremitie, they ſhall be at the laſt all taken away from vs, nay the more afflictions we indure here, the more ioyes and comforts wee ſhall enioy elſe where. Great and vnſpeakable were the ſorrowes of the Iſraelites whileſt they were in Egypt, but the Lord did not leaue them in the midſt of them, but deliuered them out of al, and gaue them noble victories ouer all their enemies, ſo long as they obeyed him. If there had beene a hundred water pottes at the marriage at Canaa as there were but ſixe, Chriſt might and woulde as eaſilie and willinglie haue turned them into wine: ſo hee both can and will turne the waters of our aduerſities, though they rage neuer ſo much, ſo as the ſtreames thereof runne ouer our ſoules into all kinde of comfort as moſt delightfull wine, which gladdeth all our hearts, if ſo bee wee will turne vnto him at the laſt. The ſufferinges of Gods people cannot bee perpetuall, but ſorrowe muſt depart, and ioy muſt returne at the laſt. *Iohn. 2*

God giueth proſperitie in his due time.

But yet hee ſuffereth vs firſt for good cauſes to be euill intreated, to wander to and fro, and to ſuffer all aduerſitie before hee ſendeth vs his gracious helpe which bringeth proſperitie. The widow woman was firſt brought to all pouertie, before by his Prophet he would ſupplie her neceſſitie. Before the Iſraelites were deliuered, they were brought to the exigent, the ſea was before, and the *Egyptians* behind them, ſo as then there was but ſmall hope *2. King. 4*

left

left of deliuerie of them. Hierusalem was rescue and saued from *Senacharib*, but *Rabsechah* and his rabblements had scaled the walles first, and were at the gates. The woman was cured of her bloodie issue, but first shee spent all shee had vpon Phisitians. The prodigall sonne was honourablie entertained, and with all good things replenished, but first his father suffered him to bee seruilye entreated, yea, almost with famine and all extremitie consumed.

God is not changed.

And yet for all this, in the Lord there is no variableneſſe nor shadow of change. The change and alteration is in the creature, and not in the Creator, who is alwaies the same. When first the ship setteth out from the hauen, and launcheth into the deepe, the land and houses hard by seem to him that is in the ship to totter to and fro, and that hee himselfe mooueth not at all, when as it is quite contrarie, for he only staggreth and is euer mooning the, and is immoueable, and cannot be stirred. *Saul* was verie sottish, and he reasoned absurdlie when as he sayd, *The Lord hath departed from me, and the Philistims fight against me.* For it was not God that departed from *Saul*, but it was *Saul* that departed frō God. The father departed not from the prodigall sonne, but the prodigall sonne tooke his vagaries, and departed from his father. And this is our case, for God is alwayes one. Imagine that thou seest a man sitting still, and one that sitteth at his right hand riseth vp and sitteth at his left: is it not manifest that this man that flitcheth and changeth hands is the man

a similitude

1. Sam. 14

similitude

that

that mooueth, and that the other al the while mooueth not: so we when we are at the right hande of Gods mercies, and do wilfullie turne by our sinnes and wickednes, into the left hand of his iudgement, is not this alteration, and turning wholie in our selues? It is a cleare case that it is. God said indeed by the mouth of his Prophet Ionas, *Yet within fortie dayes, and Niniueh shall be destroyed:* And yet *Niniueh* was not then destroyed, and yet God was not changeable. For the Niniuites that then stoode at his left hand by reason of their sinnes, and were then to be stroken, turned to his right hand by their speedie repentance, and so escaped that iudgement. The prodigall sonne when he was at Gods left hand, and should haue perished, in time turned vnto his right hand, and so was entertained: God cannot but haue a recourse to his wonted mercie. The stubborne Iewes exasperated him mightilie, and prouoked him wrathfullie to thunder against them in this maner: *Oh sinfull nation, oh people laden with iniquitie, the seede of the wicked and corrupt children, the daughter of Syon shal remaine like a cottage in a Vineyard, like a lodge in a garden of Cucumbers, and like a besieged Citie.* But presentlie his heate is allayed and qualified, and he speaketh thus mildlie and meekelie vnto them. *Wash you, make you cleane, take away the euill of your workes, though your sins were as Crimson, they shal be made white as snow, though they be red as Scarlet, they shal be as wooll: if ye consent and obey, ye shall eate the good things of the land.* In the like maner speaketh

Ionas 3

God is gracious though sinners bee vngracious

Esai. 1

the Prophet *Amos*. I *lift vp, vpon you euen a lamen-*
Amos. 5 *tation of the house of Israel, the virgin Israel is fallē,*
and shall no more rise. But by and by he mittigateth
his mood, saying: *Seeke the Lord and ye shall liue.*
Our sorrowes ende with sinne, and God turneth
with a sinner. Iudgement is turned into mercie,
when sinne is turned into repentance. And this
Psa. 89 doth *Dauid* in liuelie sort declare: *If my people for-*
sake my lawes, and walke not in my iudgements, if
they leaue my statutes and keepe not my commande-
ments, I will visit their iniquities with the rod, and
their sinnes with scourges: heere is his iudgement.
But turne thine eye and behold his mercie: *But my*
mercie and louing kindnes will I not vtterlie take
from him euer. God taxed *Adam* grieuouslie for
his sinne, and layde a verie heauie iudgement vpon
him, enioyning him to hard labour, to bring in
his liuing with the sweate of his face, and tur-
moyle of his bodie: but this labour was stinted
and restrayned to his time, that it should not bee
perpetuall, and therefore hee addeth, vntill thou
Gene. 3 returne vnto the earth from whence thou camest.
And when our first parents sinned, and God was
to expell them the pleasaunt Paradise, albeit they
had grieued him, hee had mercie on them, and
maketh them garmentes of beastes skinnes to de-
fende them from the rage of time, and to couer
their shame, that their nakednesse and filthinesse
might not be seene. Heesin sinuateth by this course
taken with *Adam*, that hee will take the same
course with *Adams* children, that in the middest

of

of iudgement he will remember mercie, and that hee will vpon our conuersion shew vs his compassion. Wherefore arise from thy sin, and Christ, shall giue thee life: despaire not of his grace, for hee hath medicine to heale all our woundes. God woundeth vs at the first, but it is to heale and cure vs at the last.

The tenth Chapter.

That God vsuallie giueth vnto a sinner, more then he can aske.

THe prodigall sonne not only speedeth with his father of his sute, but he receiueth of him more then he desired. Hee made but the motion to be a hired seruant, but the father restored him to the dignitie of a sonne. He preuented him moreouer with his liberall blessings, and graciously receyued him with all feasting and reioycing. Wherein wee may see how farre God exceedeth the manner of men, and how mans kindnes is in no sort proportionable vnto the Lords goodnes.

When as *Absalon* had murthered his brother *Ammõ*, *Dauid* his father was in some sort contẽted to be intreated for him; but he wold not grant him accesse vnto his presence, to see his face againe. But Gods good grace is such, as he not onely remitteth sinners, but admitteth them to his presence, receyueth them to his table, and suffreth thẽ continuallie 2. Sam. 14

to beholde their fathers face. It is not therefore without good foreſight & experience of his bountie, that the bleſſed Apoſtle *Paul* tearming God the father of all mercie, not content therewith addeth to his ſtile this iuſt title, *The God of all conſolation*. He thinketh it not inough to ſay, that hee is mercifull, but by amplyfying it thus, hee woulde giue vnto him a kind of abſolute and ouerflowing mercie. It belongeth to mercie onelie to forgiue ſinnes, but God ſtayeth not there, but followeth vs with his grace preuenting future ſinnes. Vpon this my ſoule receyueth great comfort: and from hence (deare Chriſtian) whenſoeuer thou humbleſt thy ſoule before God, and exhibiteſt thy ſutes and ſupplications vnto him, thou maieſt cheere and comfort thy perplexed conſcience. For this is not written in vaine for vs, for it ſerueth liuelie, as all other ſcripture giuen by inſpiration to inſtruct & comfort vs. The meditation therefore whileſt I muſe vpon this man is this, which my ſoule maketh: That it is vſuall with God, not onelie to grant the lawfull requeſts and petitions of his ſeruants, but alſo becauſe hee beſt knoweth our neceſſities, to giue vs ſuch graces as are needfull for vs, beyonde our requeſts. Hereof we haue inſtances innumerable in the Scriptures, and we ſhall do well when our caſe requireth comfort to meditate vpon them. *Abraham* beſought God onelie for the life of *Iſmael*, ſaying vnto God, *Oh that Iſmael might liue before thee*. But what was the comfort which Abraham receyued? Trulie much euerie way, more then his

heart

heart conceyued: for God thus answered him. *Sarah thy wife shal beare thee a sonne, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and as concerning Ismaell I haue heard thee, and twelue Princes shall he beget, and I will make a great nation of him.* Thus beside the life of *Ismael* which hee granted the summe of *Abrahams* sute, in his abundant mercie aboue his desire, he sent him also *Isaac*, and vouchsafed such fauour and grace to *Ismael*, as to blesse him so, as kings proceeded from his loynes.

Salomon onelie requested Wisedome for the better carriage of himselfe in his gouernment: the Lord beside wisedome which hee gaue him aboue others, heaped vpon him riches and worldly prosperitie far aboue others. 1. *King.* 3

Ezechias requested but life at Gods hande, the Lorde not onely graunted it, but gaue him a long life, and graciously added fifteene yeeres vnto his dayes. 2. *King.* 20

When as the three kings of Israel, Iudah, and Edom were to warre with Moab, and were greatlie distressed through want of water for their hoast, and for their cattell, and came vnto *Elisha* the man of God for supplie in this behalfe; the Lord not onlie satisfied their hearts desire, but moreouer went out with their armies before them, and gaue them victorie ouer the Moabites. 2. *King.* 3

The widow woman that was deepelie indebted, and had nothing to satisfie her cruell creditor he beeing vrgent, and could not bee answered, but that her two sonnes must become his bondmen, 2. *King* 4

according to the lawe, hauing nothing elſe to diſcharge his accounts. When ſhee came vnto the Prophet, bemoaning her miſhap, and required his helpe to the Lord in her behalfe, ſhe forthwith had ſuch a comfortable reliefe, as ſhee had Oyle inough giuen her, not onelie to defray all kinde of arrerages which was all ſhe deſired, but ſufficient beſide to ſupplie future wantes, which was more then ſhe deſired.

Mark. 9 Thoſe that brought the man of the palſie vnto Chriſt, deſired but bodily health for him: but Chriſt not onely healed his bodie, but cured his ſoule likewiſe, ſaying vnto him: *Sonne bee of good comfort, thy ſinnes are forgiuen thee.*

Luke. 23 The theefe beſought Chriſt onely to remember him when he came vnto his kingdome: but Chriſt moreouer promiſed him Paradiſe, and that hee ſhould be with him that day in his kingdome.

The ruler requeſted but life for his ſonne, and Chriſt gaue immediately life to his ſonne, and faith to the father, which the father deſired not.

Iohn. 4

Exod. 33 *Moſes* deſired God that he might ſee his glorie, but God anſwered him, *I will make all my good go before thee.* It is eaſie to rip vp many mo examples, further to enlarge this cõfortable doctrine, but theſe may ſatisfie a beleeuing Chriſtian. Wherefore let the diligent regard hereof raiſe vp our ſoules, whenſoeuer they are ſmitten and caſt downe with ſorrowes by reaſon of our ſinnes, and doubt we not to approach before him, be we neuer ſo ſinfull, he being ſo mercifull.

The

The eleuenth Chapter.

Of the felicitie of the faythfull, figured by the mutuall myrth and melodie that was made for the ioyfull welcomming home of the prodigall ſonne.

THe Cataſtrophe of this Comedie and concluſion of this hyſtorie is exceeding comfortable: for it endeth with myrth and ioy without ende. In this man is fulfilled this Aphoriſme of the Prophet, *He that goeth on his way mourning, and carieth out good ſeed, doubtleſſe ſhall returne home againe with ioy and bring his ſheaues with him.* Pſal. 126

This mans eſtate liuelie repreſenteth our future condition. For if we ſhall returne home from our euill wayes vnto our fathers houſe with him, wee ſhall bee partakers of his ioy with him: Hee ſhall turne our heauineſſe into ioy, hee ſhall put off our ſackecloath, and gird vs with gladneſſe. Wee ſhall be filled with the plenteouſneſſe of his houſe, and he ſhall giue vs drinke of his pleaſures, as out of a riuer.

The holie ſpirit of God taketh a great grace, in ſhrowding and cowching matters of maine moment vnder the feweſt words that may be. It is the faſhion of the world in their fabulous diſcourſes to vſe tedeous circumſtances. *Proiect ampullas, & ſequipedalia verba*: it rappeth on ſuch a tumultuous Horat. in a poetic.

confusion of wordes, as to one thing that is true, you shall haue the admixture of innumerable lies.

a similitude It is the tricke of such as are deformed to paint out themselues, and to set a good die vpon a bad cloath to bragge it out, and to beare out their blemishes with their brauerie. Such meate as is vnsauorie, a similitude must be set out with such sawce as may stirre vp the appetite, for otherwise the stomacke cannot digest it: but the simple truth howsoeuer bare and naked it appeareth, is exceeding beautifull: *Salomon* in his royaltie may not bee matched with it. The truth of Gods word is full of sucke and sappe, it is meate that may be rellished without curious cooking it. Lo here howe the vnspeakable ioyes of heauen are trussed vp in a worde, *They began to be merrie.* And truly when wee haue sayde what wee can of the ioyes of heauen, though we had the tongues of Angels, wee must at the last come to this poynt, and conclude with the spirite, That then we shall be merrie. For myrth and gladnesse is the totall summe, *The Lord shall wipe away all teares from our eyes.* Apoc. 7

But yet howsoeuer we cannot wade through the depth hereof: yet cursorilie, and as it were passing by it, it is not amisse that wee take a taste of it.

It is to bee distinguished from the momentanie myrth which this world affoordeth vs, deceitfull and changeable, *For the myrth of tabrets ceaseth, the noyse of them that reioyce ceaseth, and the ioy of the harpe ceaseth.* The miserable mirth of worldlings :24 uilitude

lings is like the fonde ioy of birdes, picking vp of corne vnder nets that are ſpred for them: And of fiſhes that greedily ſwallow vp the baite wherewith the hooke is couered. As ſtrong poyſon is often mingled with our pleaſant meates; as the whore of Babylon tempered the dregges of her fornication in a golden bowle of wine: ſo ſorrow is often ſhrowded vnder the veile of ioy; our table and delightes are often ſnares vnto vs, and the way to death. Such mirth is but in ſhewe, it is no myrth indeede: It is like the Bowlderbuſhes growing in the fennes, which in the ſpring and ſummer ſeaſon haue a liuely greene hew, and ſmel much outwardlie, but if you breake them they haue nothing at all within them. It is therefore rather to be franticke and madde, then to be any thing elſe, to bee miſled with ſuch myrth, and who ſoeuer are miſcarried with it, they reſemble madde men, who being in a phrenzie, and neare vnto their death, do ſmile and make laughter. Whileſt the voyce of man commeth out it promiſeth much matter, for manye thinges do concurre before it bee expreſſed, the tongue, the teeth, the palate, and the lips; and when all come to all it is nothing but a ſounde reuerberating the ayre: ſo manie thinges doe conſpire and meete togither to allure vs, and delight vs in our worldlie merriments, but when our breath goeth out of vs, and we returne vnto our duſt, and the earth is our couering, our ioy departeth from vs.

A ſimilitude

A ſimilitude

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But our myrth in our fathers houſe in the life to come, is the onely durable and complete myrth.

There

1.Cor.2 There wee ſhall ſee what can bee deſired, and beyond our deſires. For the eye hath not ſeene, the eare hath not heard, neither can the heart conceiue, the things that God hath prepared for them that loue him. Wee ſhall there hunger no more, neither thirſt anie more, neyther ſhall the Sunne light on vs, neither anie heate: for the Lambe which is in the middeſt of the throane, ſhall gouerne vs, and ſhall leade vs vnto the liuely fountaines of waters, and God ſhal wipe away al teares from our eyes. Reuel.7

This myrth in ſome ſort may bee manifeſted vnto vs by the myrth in this worlde, which wee often vppon ſundrie occurrences doe conceyue. The myrth is much which is among friends, kinſfolkes and allyes vppon their ioynt meeting, hauing before beene a long time ſundred. When *Ioſeph* made himſelfe knowne to his brethren, it paſſeth the ioy that was then betwixt them. *Ioſeph* was ſo rauiſhed with the ſight of them, as hee could not refrayne teares, crying out ſo loudlie, as the houſe ſounded with the noyſe of it, the Egyptians heard it, the houſe of *Pharao* heard it alſo. But the heauens ſhall clappe their handes, the Saints ſhall reioyce and ſing, crying with a lowde voyce, ſaying: Saluation commeth of our God, that ſitteth vpon the Throne, and of the Lambe: trebbling and quauering with ſweete concent and aſſent, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabbaoth: when we come vnto the mount Syon, and citie of the liuing God, to the celeſtial Hieruſalem, & com- Gen.45 uel.7 .12

panie

panie of innumerable Angels, and to Ieſus the mediator of the newe Teſtament, where wee ſhall all meet togither, and ſit with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Iacob*, in the reſurrection of the iuſt.

At our ſolemne feaſts there vſe to bee ſolemne ioy. When king *Ahaſhueroſh* diſpoſed himſelfe to bee merrie with his Princes, and ſhew the riches and glorie of his kingdome, and the honour of his Maieſtie, hee feaſted them an hundred and foure-ſcore dayes togither: therefore infinite will the ioy and triumph bee in the court of heauen, when the king of all kinges ſhall feaſt his deare *S*aintes, not for a time, but for all eternitie, and ſhall ſhew them his heauenlie dignitie and felicitie which is prepared for them. *Eſther.1*

It is vſuall with many to celebrate with mirth the memoriall of their birth, when it rather occaſioneth vs with *Ieremie* and *Iob*, to bee heauie for it: *Pharao* ſolemnized the day of his natiuitie with triumphant feaſting, and ſo did *Herod*: yet this myrth and muſick was mixed with mourning, for the one at that time hanged his chiefe Baker, and the other beheaded innocent *Iohn* the *Bap^a tiſt*. But in heauen when we ſolemnize our newe birth, wee ſhall haue all ioy without mixture of ſorrow, there can neuer any more miſerie or calamitie befall vs. *Gen.40* *Mark 6* *Ierem.20* *Iob.3*

The wiſe men of the *E*aſt were exceeding glad when they ſaw but the Starre, which prognoſticated and foreſhewed the natiuitie of our ſauior. Therefore when wee in heauen ſhall bee partaker *Matt.2*

of

of his glorie, then muſt needes our heartes be filled with laughter, and our tongues with ioy.

We ſee how the birdes of the aire are ioyfull at the ariſing of the ſunne, chirping and ſinging, and leaping vpon the branches. Wherefore when the ſonne of righteouſneſſe appeereth comforting our hearts, how ought we to skip like a Hart, to leape vp and downe like a yong vnicorne? It was a ioy to *Adam* when he was in his proſperitie, in his earthly Paradiſe, in his created holines: but afterward when he had tranſgreſſed the mandate God gaue him, and did degenerate from his firſt creation, his harp was turned into mourning, and his organes into the voice of them that weepe. What ioy then will it be vnto vs when we are in heauenly paradiſe, where we can ſinne no more, and ſo conſequently can ſorrow no more, where are all kindes of pleaſures in aboundance, at the right of the father for euermore?

The foure leapers when they entred into the Aramites campe, and ſhared out their goods, they mutuallie ioyed one an other for that happe. Oh therefore let vs be ioyfull togither, let vs reioyce in our beddes For our ioy is as the ioy of harueſt, and as men reioyce when they diuide a ſpoyle. For the hoaſt of our ſinnes ſhal then be diſcomfited: when we are in heauen, Sathan ſhal no more haue ought to do with vs, death ſhall bee deſtroyed, and ſwallowed vp in victorie, all our enemies ſhall flie away before vs, and wee of Gods houſholde ſhall diuide the ſpoyle.

Though

Though we hung our harpes vpon the willowe trees, when we sate by the waters of Babylon, yet now O man of God, call for thy instrument, awake lute and harpe, and let vs awake earlie, and let vs sing the Lords song in our owne land.

If he that hath matters of law depending in iudiciall courts, cannot but be glad when his case is put to his counsellor and aduocate to be comprimitted and awarded, for he is thereby sure that it will goe wel on his side: Why then deere Christian comfort thy sobbing and sighing soule, for this is thy case, thy sinnes that pleaded against thee at Gods barre, and were like to condemne thee, are put to Christ thy sauiour & redeemer, to vmper and determine: so as we need not feare, for though we sin we haue an aduocate with the father, Iesus Christ the iust, & he is the propitiation for our sinnes: our sinnes shall rather adorne vs then disgrace vs, because of him. For it is no disgrace to haue a rent garment, if so be it may be hidden and couered with a lace: our sins are rents, and the red blood of our sweet sauiour, is the redde lace which hath couered the seame and rupture of our sinnes. A similitude 1. Iohn. 2.

If the men of Bethshemeth reioyced with themselues because they had espied the ark of the Lord: wee shall haue much more matter of myrth afforded vs when we shall see the verie heauens open readie to receiue vs, and we shall espie Iesus at the right hand of his father, who hath prepared a place for vs. 1. Sam. 6

A glad man was *Zacheus* when so good a guest Luk. 19

as

as Christ diuerted into his house, but gladder may we be that he will vouchsafe to enter into our souls, that we shall dwell with him, and he with vs in his fathers kingdome world without ende.

Mat. 13 The husbandman when he found the treasure in the field, he could not rest for ioy, but forthwith departed, made a sale of all that he had in the worlde beside, to make purchase of the field: But all the treasures of God the father in his sonne Christ, shal be giuen vnto vs. Base therefore in our eyes is the vanitie of this world, we willinglie renounce it to make so good a change, and wee are glad of such successe.

1. King. 1 When Salomon was aduãced to his fathers crown and dignitie, all the people piped with pipes, and reioiced with great ioy, so that the earth rang with the sound of them. We shall see our Christ the king of peace, who hath triumphed valiantly, who hath put downe all his enemies vnder his feete verie exceeding glorious, crowned with maiestie and honour: our heartes therefore shall be glad, and our tongs shall reioice, for the staffe of our shoulder, the yoke of our burden, the rod of our oppressor shal be broken as in the day of Midian. Wherefore reioice

Phil. 4. 4 in the Lord alwaies, and again I say reioice. Let the flouds clap their hands, and let the hils reioice. Let the singers go before, and the minstrels folow after, and let the damsels come playing with their pipes. Let the Leuites daunce before the arke, and let the priests be clothed with gladnes, and let vs all sing praises vnto the holy one of Israel.

FINIS.

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